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DR. JOHNSON'S WORKS.

JOURNEY TO THE HEBRIDES.

TALES OF THE IMAGINATION.

PRAYERS AND SERMONS.

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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

IN NINE VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE NINTH.

OXFORD,

PUBLISHED BY TALBOYS AND WHEELER;
AND W. PICKERING, LONDON.

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PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS

TO THE

JOURNEY TO THE HEBRIDES.

THE Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland was first published in the year 1775. Johnson had conceived in early life a desire to visit those romantic and remote retreats, and he was, at an advanced age, enabled to gratify the wish of his childhood, in company with Mr. Boswell, in the autumn of 1773. The first impulse was given to his mind by his father's putting into his hands Martin's Voyage to St. Kilda: and we have elsewhere had occasion to remark his early fondness for books of adventurous travels [a].

The brief history which he has given of his little tour, is stamped with the impress of his powerful mind; and abounding with useful information, judicious remark, and well-drawn description, must be interesting to every reader whose taste has not been vitiated by the verbose and out-spun style of modern travel-writing. The man must be blinded by prejudice who decries the merits of Johnson's narrative, because he faithfully records what he really saw, and planted no waving and imaginary forests on naked and dreary heaths, nor professed to have found pastoral simplicity and innocence amidst the dark rocks and squalid cabins which he successively visited.

He travelled as he wrote, and read and conversed with utility in his view, for an increase of knowledge in life and manners.

[a] See vol. v. p. 255, note.

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Like his own Rasselas, "his business was with man; he travelled not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world[b]." The journey should be perused together with his letters to Mrs. Thrale, written on his route, which may be safely pronounced to afford models for elegant epistolary communication on travelling and its incidents. They, as well as the journey, abound with descriptions conveyed in unaffected language, but awakening emotions almost exclusively under the dominion of poetry.

His plaintive and simple phrase, "and paradise was opened in the wild," as illustrative of the softening effect of the evening services of religion, performed in a domestic group on the rugged island of Inch Kenneth, has, perhaps, been seldom surpassed. —We need scarcely allude to his heart-thrilling meditations among the ruins of Iona, nor to his exquisite picture of the scene where his first design to give his narrative to the world was conceived. "We would invoke the winds of the Caledonian mountains," exclaim the critical reviewers of the journey, "to blow for ever with their softest breezes on the bank where our author reclined; and request of Flora that it might be perpetually adorned with the gayest and most fragrant productions of the year."

Their taste is poor indeed who can peruse the passages to which we have referred, and have their minds so little enthralled thereby, as to have leisure to search whether the writer hated a Scotchman. We dismiss the unworthy inquiry.

[b] Rasselas, chap. xxx.

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A

JOURNEY

TO THE

WESTERN ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND.

I HAD desired to visit the Hebrides, or Western Islands of Scotland, so long, that I scarcely remember how the wish was originally excited; and was, in the autumn of the year 1773, induced to undertake the journey, by finding in Mr. Boswell a companion, whose acuteness would help my inquiry, and whose gaiety of conversation and civility of manners are sufficient to counteract the inconveniencies of travel, in countries less hospitable than we have passed.

On the eighteenth of August, we left Edinburgh, a city too well known to admit description, and directed our course northward, along the eastern coast of Scotland, accompanied the first day by another gentleman, who could stay with us only long enough to show us how much we lost at separation.

As we crossed the frith of Forth, our curiosity was attracted by Inch Keith, a small island, which neither of my companions had ever visited, though, lying within their view, it had all their lives solicited their notice. Here, by climbing, with some difficulty, over shattered crags, we made the first experiment of unfrequented coasts. Inch Keith is nothing more than a rock covered with a thin layer of earth, not wholly bare of grass, and very fertile of thistles. A small herd of cows grazes annually upon it in the summer. It seems never to have afforded to man or beast a permanent habitation.

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We found only the ruins of a small fort, not so injured by time but that it might be easily restored to its former state. It seems never to have been intended as a place of strength, nor was built to endure a siege, but merely to afford cover to a few soldiers, who, perhaps, had the charge of a battery, or were stationed to give signals of approaching danger. There is, therefore, no provision of water within the walls, though the spring is so near, that it might have been easily enclosed. One of the stones had this inscription: "Maria Reg. 1564." It has probably been neglected from the time that the whole island had the same king.

We left this little island, with our thoughts employed awhile on the different appearance that it would have made, if it had been placed at the same distance from London, with the same facility of approach; with what emulation of price a few rocky acres would have been purchased, and with what expensive industry they would have been cultivated and adorned.

When we landed, we found our chaise ready, and passed through Kinghorn, Kirkaldy, and Cowpar, places not unlike the small or straggling market-towns in those parts of England where commerce and manufactures have not yet produced opulence.

Though we were yet in the most populous part of Scotland, and at so small a distance from the capital, we met few passengers.

The roads are neither rough nor dirty; and it affords a southern stranger a new kind of pleasure to travel so commodiously without the interruption of tollgates. Where the bottom is rocky, as it seems commonly to be in Scotland, a smooth way is made, indeed, with great labour, but it never wants repairs; and in those parts where adventitious materials are necessary, the ground, once consolidated, is rarely broken; for the inland commerce is not great, nor are heavy commodities often transported otherwise than by water. The carriages in common use are small carts, drawn each by one little horse; and a man

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seems to derive some degree of dignity and importance from the reputation of possessing a two-horse cart.

At an hour somewhat late we came to St. Andrews, a city once archiepiscopal; where that university still subsists in which philosophy was formerly taught by Buchanan, whose name has as fair a claim to immortality as can be conferred by modern latinity, and perhaps a fairer than the instability of vernacular languages admits.

We found that, by the interposition of some invisible friend, lodgings had been provided for us at the house of one of the professors, whose easy civility quickly made us forget that we were strangers; and in the whole time of our stay we were gratified by every mode of kindness, and entertained with all the elegance of lettered hospitality.

In the morning, we rose to perambulate a city, which only history shows to have once flourished, and surveyed the ruins of ancient magnificence, of which even the ruins cannot long be visible, unless some care be taken to preserve them; and where is the pleasure of preserving such mournful memorials? They have been, till very lately, so much neglected, that every man carried away the stones who fancied that he wanted them.

The cathedral, of which the foundations may be still traced, and a small part of the wall is standing, appears to have been a spacious and majestick building, not unsuitable to the primacy of the kingdom. Of the architecture, the poor remains can hardly exhibit, even to an artist, a sufficient specimen. It was demolished, as is well known, in the tumult and violence of Knox's reformation.

Not far from the cathedral, on the margin of the water, stands a fragment of the castle, in which the archbishop anciently resided. It was never very large, and was built with more attention to security than pleasure. Cardinal Beatoun is said to have had workmen employed in improving its fortifications, at the time when he was murdered by the ruffians of reformation, in the manner of

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which Knox has given what he himself calls a merry narrative.

The change of religion in Scotland, eager and vehement as it was, raised an epidemical enthusiasm, compounded of sullen scrupulousness and warlike ferocity, which, in a people whom idleness resigned to their own thoughts, and who, conversing only with each other, suffered no dilution of their zeal from the gradual influx of new opinions, was long transmitted, in its full strength, from the old to the young, but, by trade and intercourse with England, is now visibly abating, and giving way too fast to that laxity of practice, and indifference of opinion, in which men, not sufficiently instructed to find the middle point, too easily shelter themselves from rigour and constraint.

The city of St. Andrews, when it had lost its archiepiscopal preeminence, gradually decayed. One of its streets is now lost; and in those that remain, there is the silence and solitude of inactive indigence and gloomy depopulation.

The university, within a few years, consisted of three colleges, but is now reduced to two; the college of St. Leonard being lately dissolved by the sale of its buildings, and the appropriation of its revenues to the professors of the two others. The chapel of the alienated college is yet standing, a fabrick not inelegant of external structure; but I was always, by some civil excuse, hindered from entering it. A decent attempt, as I was since told, has been made to convert it into a kind of greenhouse, by planting its area with shrubs. This new method of gardening is unsuccessful; the plants do not hitherto prosper. To what use it will next be put, I have no pleasure in conjecturing. It is something, that its present state is, at least, not ostentatiously displayed. Where there is yet shame, there may in time be virtue.

The dissolution of St. Leonard's college was, doubtless, necessary; but of that necessity there is reason to complain. It is surely not without just reproach, that a

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nation, of which the commerce is hourly extending, and the wealth increasing, denies any participation of its prosperity to its literary societies; and, while its merchants or its nobles are raising palaces, suffers its universities to moulder into dust.

Of the two colleges yet standing, one is, by the institution of its founder, appropriated to divinity. It is said to be capable of containing fifty students; but more than one must occupy a chamber. The library, which is of late erection, is not very spacious, but elegant and luminous.

The doctor, by whom it was shown, hoped to irritate or subdue my English vanity, by telling me, that we had no such repository of books in England.

St. Andrews seems to be a place eminently adapted to study and education, being situated in a populous, yet a cheap country, and exposing the minds and manners of young men neither to the levity and dissoluteness of a capital city, nor to the gross luxury of a town of commerce, places naturally unpropitious to learning; in one, the desire of knowledge easily gives way to the love of pleasure, and in the other, is in danger of yielding to the love of money.

The students, however, are represented as, at this time, not exceeding a hundred. Perhaps it may be some obstruction to their increase that there is no episcopal chapel in the place. I saw no reason for imputing their paucity to the present professors; nor can the expense of an academical education be very reasonably objected. A student of the highest class may keep his annual session, or, as the English call it, his term, which lasts seven months, for about fifteen pounds, and one of lower rank for less than ten; in which, board, lodging, and instruction are all included.

The chief magistrate resident in the university, answering to our vicechancellor, and to the *rector magnificus* on the continent, had commonly the title of lord rector; but, being addressed only as Mr. rector, in an inauguratory

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speech, by the present chancellor, he has fallen from his former dignity of style. Lordship was very liberally annexed by our ancestors to any station or character of dignity. They said, the lord-general, and lord ambassadour; so we still say, my lord, to the judge upon the circuit, and yet retain in our liturgy, the lords of the council.

In walking among the ruins of religious buildings, we came to two vaults, over which had formerly stood the house of the sub-prior. One of the vaults was inhabited by an old woman, who claimed the right of abode there, as the widow of a man whose ancestors had possessed the same gloomy mansion for no less than four generations. The right, however it began, was considered as established by legal prescription, and the old woman lives undisturbed. She thinks, however, that she has a claim to something more than sufferance; for, as her husband's name was Bruce, she is allied to royalty, and told Mr. Boswell, that when there were persons of quality in the place, she was distinguished by some notice; that, indeed, she is now neglected, but she spins a thread, has the company of a cat, and is troublesome to nobody.

Having now seen whatever this ancient city offered to our curiosity, we left it with good wishes, having reason to be highly pleased with the attention that was paid us. But whoever surveys the world must see many things that give him pain. The kindness of the professors did not contribute to abate the uneasy remembrance of an university declining, a college alienated, and a church profaned and hastening to the ground.

St. Andrews, indeed, has formerly suffered more atrocious ravages and more extensive destruction; but recent evils affect with greater force. We were reconciled to the sight of archiepiscopal ruins. The distance of a calamity from the present time seems to preclude the mind from contact or sympathy. Events long past are barely known; they are not considered. We read with as little emotion the violence of Knox and his followers, as the irruptions of Alaric and the Goths. Had the university

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been destroyed two centuries ago, we should not have regretted it; but to see it pining in decay, and struggling for life, fills the mind with mournful images and ineffectual wishes.

As we knew sorrow and wishes to be vain, it was now our business to mind our way. The roads of Scotland afford little diversion to the traveller, who seldom sees himself either encountered or overtaken, and who has nothing to contemplate but grounds that have no visible boundaries, or are separated by walls of loose stone. From the bank of the Tweed to St. Andrews I had never seen a single tree, which I did not believe to have grown up far within the present century. Now and then about a gentleman's house stands a small plantation, which, in Scotch, is called a *policy*, but of these there are few, and those few all very young. The variety of sun and shade is here utterly unknown. There is no tree for either shelter or timber. The oak and the thorn is equally a stranger, and the whole country is extended in uniform nakedness, except that in the road between Kirkaldy and Cowpar, I passed for a few yards between two hedges. A tree might be a show in Scotland, as a horse in Venice. At St. Andrews Mr. Boswell found only one, and recommended it to my notice; I told him that it was rough and low, or looked as if I thought so. "This," said he, "is nothing to another a few miles off." I was still less delighted to hear that another tree was not to be seen nearer. "Nay," said a gentleman that stood by, "I know but of this and that tree in the county."

The lowlands of Scotland had once, undoubtedly, an equal portion of woods with other countries. Forests are every where gradually diminished, as architecture and cultivation prevail, by the increase of people and the introduction of arts. But, I believe, few regions have been denuded like this, where many centuries must have passed in waste, without the least thought of future supply. Davies observes in his account of Ireland, that no Irishman had ever planted an orchard. For that negligence

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some excuse might be drawn from an unsettled state of life, and the instability of property; but, in Scotland, possession has long been secure, and inheritance regular, yet it may be doubted whether, before the union, any man between Edinburgh and England had ever set a tree.

Of this improvidence no other account can be given than that it, probably, began in times of tumult, and continued, because it had begun. Established custom is not easily broken, till some great event shakes the whole system of things, and life seems to recommence upon new principles. That, before the union, the Scots had little trade and little money, is no valid apology; for plantation is the least expensive of all methods of improvement. To drop a seed into the ground, can cost nothing, and the trouble is not great of protecting the young plant, till it is out of danger; though it must be allowed to have some difficulty in places like these, where they have neither wood for palisades, nor thorns for hedges.

Our way was over the firth of Tay, where, though the water was not wide, we paid four shillings for ferrying the chaise. In Scotland the necessaries of life are easily procured, but superfluities and elegancies are of the same price, at least, as in England, and, therefore, may be considered as much dearer.

We stopped awhile at Dundee, where I remember nothing remarkable, and mounting our chaise again, came about the close of the day to Aberbrothick.

The monastery of Aberbrothick is of great renown in the history of Scotland. Its ruins afford ample testimony of its ancient magnificence. Its extent might, I suppose, easily be found by following the walls among the grass and weeds, and its height is known by some parts yet standing. The arch of one of the gates is entire, and of another only so far dilapidated as to diversify the appearance. A square apartment of great loftiness is yet standing; its use I could not conjecture, as its elevation was very disproportionate to its area. Two corner towers particularly attracted our attention. Mr. Boswell, whose in-

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quisitiveness is seconded by great activity, scrambled in at a high window, but found the stairs within broken, and could not reach the top. Of the other tower we were told that the inhabitants sometimes climbed it, but we did not immediately discern the entrance, and, as the night was gathering upon us, thought proper to desist. Men skilled in architecture might do what we did not attempt; they might probably form an exact ground-plot of this venerable edifice. They may, from some parts yet standing, conjecture its general form, and, perhaps, by comparing it with other buildings of the same kind and the same age, attain an idea very near to truth. I should scarcely have regretted my journey, had it afforded nothing more than the sight of Aberbrothick.

Leaving these fragments of magnificence, we travelled on to Montrose, which we surveyed in the morning, and found it well built, airy, and clean. The town-house is a handsome fabrick with a portico. We then went to view the English chapel, and found a small church, clean to a degree unknown in any other part of Scotland, with commodious galleries, and, what was yet less expected, with an organ.

At our inn we did not find a reception such as we thought proportionate to the commercial opulence of the place; but Mr. Boswell desired me to observe that the innkeeper was an Englishman, and I then defended him, as well as I could.

When I had proceeded thus far, I had opportunities of observing what I had never heard, that there were many beggars in Scotland. In Edinburgh the proportion is, I think, not less than in London, and in the smaller places it is far greater than in English towns of the same extent. It must, however, be allowed, that they are not importunate, nor clamorous. They solicit silently, or very modestly, and, therefore, though their behaviour may strike with more force the heart of a stranger, they are certainly in danger of missing the attention of their countrymen. Novelty has always some power: an unaccustomed mode

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of begging excites an unaccustomed degree of pity. But the force of novelty is, by its own nature, soon at an end; the efficacy of outcry and perseverance is permanent and certain.

The road from Montrose exhibited a continuation of the same appearances. The country is still naked, the hedges are of stone, and the fields so generally ploughed, that it is hard to imagine where grass is found for the horses that till them. The harvest, which was almost ripe, appeared very plentiful.

Early in the afternoon, Mr. Boswell observed, that we were at no great distance from the house of lord Monboddo. The magnetism of his conversation easily drew us out of our way, and the entertainment which we received would have been a sufficient recompense for a much greater deviation.

The roads beyond Edinburgh, as they are less frequented, must be expected to grow gradually rougher; but they were hitherto by no means incommodious. We travelled on with the gentle pace of a Scotch driver, who, having no rivals in expedition, neither gives himself nor his horses unnecessary trouble. We did not affect the impatience we did not feel, but were satisfied with the company of each other, as well riding in the chaise, as sitting at an inn. The night and the day are equally solitary and equally safe; for where there are so few travellers, why should there be robbers?

We came somewhat late to Aberdeen, and found the inn so full, that we had some difficulty in obtaining admission, till Mr. Boswell made himself known. His name overpowered all objection, and we found a very good house and civil treatment.

I received the next day a very kind letter from sir Alexander Gordon, whom I had formerly known in London, and, after a cessation of all intercourse for near twenty years, met here professor of physick in the King's college. Such unexpected renewals of acquaintance may be numbered among the most pleasing incidents of life.

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The knowledge of one professor soon procured me the notice of the rest, and I did not want any token of regard, being conducted wherever there was any thing which I desired to see, and entertained, at once, with the novelty of the place, and the kindness of communication.

To write of the cities of our own island with the solemnity of geographical description, as if we had been cast upon a newly discovered coast, has the appearance of a very frivolous ostentation; yet, as Scotland is little known to the greater part of those who may read these observations, it is not superfluous to relate, that under the name of Aberdeen are comprised two towns, standing about a mile distant from each other, but governed, I think, by the same magistrates.

Old Aberdeen is the ancient episcopal city, in which are still to be seen the remains of the cathedral. It has the appearance of a town in decay, having been situated, in times when commerce was yet unstudied, with very little attention to the commodiousness of the harbour.

New Aberdeen has all the bustle of prosperous trade, and all the show of increasing opulence. It is built by the waterside. The houses are large and lofty, and the streets spacious and clean. They build almost wholly with the granite used in the new pavement of the streets of London, which is well known not to want hardness, yet they shape it easily. It is beautiful, and must be very lasting.

What particular parts of commerce are chiefly exercised by the merchants of Aberdeen, I have not inquired. The manufacture which forces itself upon a stranger's eye is that of knit-stockings, on which the women of the lower class are visibly employed.

In each of these towns there is a college, or in stricter language an university; for in both there are professors of the same parts of learning, and the colleges hold their sessions and confer degrees separately, with total independence of one on the other.

In Old Aberdeen stands the King's college, of which the first president was Hector Boece, or Boethius, who

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may be justly reverenced as one of the revivers of elegant learning. When he studied at Paris, he was acquainted with Erasmus, who afterwards gave him a publick testimony of his esteem, by inscribing to him a catalogue of his works. The style of Boethius, though, perhaps, not always rigorously pure, is formed with great diligence upon ancient models, and wholly uninfected with monastick barbarity. His history is written with elegance and vigour, but his fabulousness and credulity are justly blamed. His fabulousness, if he was the author of the fictions, is a fault for which no apology can be made; but his credulity may be excused in an age, when all men were credulous. Learning was then rising on the world; but ages so long accustomed to darkness, were too much dazzled with its light to see any thing distinctly. The first race of scholars in the fifteenth century, and some time after, were, for the most part, learning to speak, rather than to think, and were, therefore, more studious of elegance than of truth. The contemporaries of Boethius thought it sufficient to know what the ancients had delivered. The examination of tenets and of facts was reserved for another generation.

Boethius, as president of the university, enjoyed a revenue of forty Scottish marks, about two pounds four shillings and sixpence of sterling money. In the present age of trade and taxes, it is difficult even for the imagination so to raise the value of money, or so to diminish the demands of life, as to suppose four-and-forty shillings a year an honourable stipend; yet it was, probably, equal, not only to the needs, but to the rank of Boethius. The wealth of England was, undoubtedly, to that of Scotland more than five to one, and it is known that Henry the eighth, among whose faults avarice was never reckoned, granted to Roger Ascham, as a reward of his learning, a pension of ten pounds a year.

The other, called the Marischal college, is in the new town. The hall is large and well lighted. One of its ornaments is the picture of Arthur Johnston, who was prin-

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cipal of the college, and who holds, among the Latin poets of Scotland, the next place to the elegant Buchanan.

In the library I was shown some curiosities; a Hebrew manuscript of exquisite penmanship, and a Latin translation of Aristotle's Politicks by Leonardus Aretinus, written in the Roman character with nicety and beauty, which, as the art of printing has made them no longer necessary, are not now to be found. This was one of the latest performances of the transcribers, for Aretinus died but about twenty years before typography was invented. This version has been printed, and may be found in libraries, but is little read; for the same books have been since translated both by Victorius and Lambinus, who lived in an age more cultivated, but, perhaps, owed in part to Aretinus that they were able to excel him. Much is due to those who first broke the way to knowledge, and left only to their successours the task of smoothing it.

In both these colleges the methods of instruction are nearly the same; the lectures differing only by the accidental difference of diligence, or ability in the professors. The students wear scarlet gowns, and the professors black, which is, I believe, the academical dress in all the Scottish universities, except that of Edinburgh, where the scholars are not distinguished by any particular habit. In the King's college there is kept a publick table, but the scholars of the Marischal college are boarded in the town. The expense of living is here, according to the information that I could obtain, somewhat more than at St. Andrews.

The course of education is extended to four years, at the end of which those who take a degree, who are not many, become masters of arts; and whoever is a master may, if he pleases, immediately commence doctor. The title of doctor, however, was, for a considerable time, bestowed only on physicians. The advocates are examined, and approved by their own body; the ministers were not ambitious of titles, or were afraid of being censured for ambition; and the doctorate in every faculty was commonly

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given or sold into other countries. The ministers are now reconciled to distinction, and, as it must always happen that some will excel others, have thought graduation a proper testimony of uncommon abilities or acquisitions.

The indiscriminate collation of degrees has justly taken away that respect which they originally claimed, as stamps by which the literary value of men so distinguished was authoritatively denoted. That academical honours, or any others, should be conferred with exact proportion to merit, is more than human judgment or human integrity have given reason to expect. Perhaps degrees in universities cannot be better adjusted by any general rule than by the length of time passed in the publick profession of learning. An English or Irish doctorate cannot be obtained by a very young man, and it is reasonable to suppose, what is likewise by experience commonly found true, that he who is by age qualified to be a doctor, has in so much time gained learning sufficient not to disgrace the title, or wit sufficient not to desire it.

The Scotch universities hold but one term or session in the year. That of St. Andrews continues eight months, that of Aberdeen only five, from the first of November to the first of April.

In Aberdeen there is an English chapel, in which the congregation was numerous and splendid. The form of publick worship used by the church of England, is in Scotland legally practised in licensed chapels, served by clergymen of English or Irish ordination, and, by tacit connivance, quietly permitted in separate congregations, supplied with ministers by the successours of the bishops who were deprived at the revolution.

We came to Aberdeen on Saturday, August 21. On Monday we were invited into the town-hall, where I had the freedom of the city given me by the lord provost. The honour conferred had all the decorations that politeness could add, and, what, I am afraid, I should not have had to say of any city south of the Tweed, I found no petty officer bowing for a fee.

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The parchment containing the record of admission is, with the seal appending, fastened to a riband, and worn for one day by the new citizen in his hat.

By a lady who saw us at the chapel, the earl of Errol was informed of our arrival, and we had the honour of an invitation to his seat, called Slanes castle, as I am told, improperly, from the castle of that name, which once stood at a place not far distant.

The road beyond Aberdeen grew more stony, and continued equally naked of all vegetable decoration. We travelled over a tract of ground near the sea, which, not long ago, suffered a very uncommon and unexpected calamity. The sand of the shore was raised by a tempest in such quantities, and carried to such a distance, that an estate was overwhelmed and lost. Such and so hopeless was the barrenness superinduced, that the owner, when he was required to pay the usual tax, desired rather to resign the ground.

We came, in the afternoon, to Slanes castle, built upon the margin of the sea, so that the walls of one of the towers seem only a continuation of a perpendicular rock, the foot of which is beaten by the waves. To walk round the house seemed impracticable. From the windows the eye wanders over the sea that separates Scotland from Norway, and, when the winds beat with violence, must enjoy all the terrifick grandeur of the tempestuous ocean. I would not, for my amusement, wish for a storm; but, as storms, whether wished or not, will sometimes happen, I may say, without violation of humanity, that I should willingly look out upon them from Slanes castle.

When we were about to take our leave, our departure was prohibited by the countess, till we should have seen two places upon the coast, which she rightly considered as worthy of curiosity, Dun Buy, and the Buller of Buchan, to which Mr. Boyd very kindly conducted us.

Dun Buy, which in Erse is said to signify the yellow rock, is a double protuberance of stone, open to the main-sea on one side, and parted from the land by a very

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narrow channel on the other. It has its name and its colour from the dung of innumerable seafowls, which, in the spring, choose this place, as convenient for incubation, and have their eggs and their young taken in great abundance. One of the birds that frequent this rock has, as we were told, its body not larger than a duck's, and yet lays eggs as large as those of a goose. This bird is by the inhabitants named a *coot*. That which is called *coot* in England is here a *cooter*.

Upon these rocks there was nothing that could long detain attention, and we soon turned our eyes to the Buller, or Bouilloir of Buchan, which no man can see with indifference, who has either sense of danger, or delight in rarity. It is a rock perpendicularly tubulated, united on one side with a high shore, and on the other rising steep to a great height above the mainsea. The top is open, from which may be seen a dark gulf of water which flows into the cavity, through a breach made in the lower part of the enclosing rock. It has the appearance of a vast well bordered with a wall. The edge of the Buller is not wide, and to those that walk round, appears very narrow. He that ventures to look downward sees, that if his foot should slip, he must fall from his dreadful elevation upon stones on one side, or into the water on the other. We, however, went round, and were glad when the circuit was completed.

When we came down to the sea, we saw some boats, and rowers, and resolved to explore the Buller, at the bottom. We entered the arch, which the water had made, and found ourselves in a place, which, though we could not think ourselves in danger, we could scarcely survey without some recoil of the mind. The basin, in which we floated, was nearly circular, perhaps, thirty yards in diameter. We were enclosed by a natural wall, rising steep on every side to a height which produced the idea of insurmountable confinement. The interception of all lateral light caused a dismal gloom. Round us was a perpendicular rock, above us the distant sky, and below an un-

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known profundity of water. If I had any malice against a walking spirit, instead of laying him in the Red sea, I would condemn him to reside in the Buller of Buchan.

But terrour without danger is only one of the sports of fancy, a voluntary agitation of the mind that is permitted no longer than it pleases. We were soon at leisure to examine the place with minute inspection, and found many cavities which, as the watermen told us, went backward to a depth which they had never explored. Their extent we had not time to try; they are said to serve different purposes. Ladies come hither sometimes, in the summer, with collations, and smugglers make them storehouses for clandestine merchandise. It is hardly to be doubted but the pirates of ancient times often used them as magazines of arms, or repositories of plunder.

To the little vessels used by the northern rowers, the Buller may have served as a shelter from storms, and perhaps as a retreat from enemies; the entrance might have been stopped, or guarded with little difficulty, and though the vessels, that were stationed within, would have been battered with stones showered on them from above, yet the crews would have lain safe in the caverns.

Next morning we continued our journey, pleased with our reception at Slanes castle, of which we had now leisure to recount the grandeur and the elegance; for our way afforded us few topicks of conversation. The ground was neither uncultivated nor unfruitful; but it was still all arable. Of flocks or herds there was no appearance. I had now travelled two hundred miles in Scotland, and seen only one tree not younger than myself.

We dined this day at the house of Mr. Frazer of Streichton, who showed us in his grounds some stones yet standing of a druidical circle, and, what I began to think more worthy of notice, some forest-trees of full growth.

At night we came to Bamff, where I remember nothing

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that particularly claimed my attention. The ancient towns of Scotland have generally an appearance unusual to Englishmen. The houses, whether great or small, are for the most part built of stones. Their ends are now and then next the streets, and the entrance into them is very often by a flight of steps, which reaches up to the second story; the floor which is level with the ground being entered only by stairs descending within the house.

The art of joining squares of glass with lead is little used in Scotland, and in some places is totally forgotten. The frames of their windows are all of wood. They are more frugal of their glass than the English, and will often, in houses not otherwise mean, compose a square of two pieces, not joining like cracked glass, but with one edge laid, perhaps, half an inch over the other. Their windows do not move upon hinges, but are pushed up and drawn down in grooves, yet they are seldom accommodated with weights and pulleys. He that would have his window open must hold it with his hand, unless, what may be sometimes found among good contrivers, there be a nail, which he may stick into a hole, to keep it from falling.

What cannot be done without some uncommon trouble or particular expedient, will not often be done at all. The incommodiousness of the Scotch windows keeps them very closely shut. The necessity of ventilating human habitations has not yet been found by our northern neighbours; and, even in houses well built and elegantly furnished, a stranger may be sometimes forgiven, if he allows himself to wish for fresher air.

These diminutive observations seem to take away something from the dignity of writing, and, therefore, are never communicated but with hesitation, and a little fear of abasement and contempt. But it must be remembered, that life consists not of a series of illustrious actions, or elegant enjoyments; the greater part of our time passes in compliance with necessities, in the performance of

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daily duties, in the removal of small inconveniencies, in the procurement of petty pleasures; and we are well or ill at ease, as the main stream of life glides on smoothly, or is ruffled by small obstacles and frequent interruption. The true state of every nation, is the state of common life. The manners of a people are not to be found in the schools of learning, or the palaces of greatness, where the national character is obscured or obliterated by travel or instruction, by philosophy or vanity; nor is publick happiness to be estimated by the assemblies of the gay, or the banquets of the rich. The great mass of nations is neither rich nor gay: they whose aggregate constitutes the people, are found in the streets and the villages, in the shops and farms; and from them, collectively considered, must the measure of general prosperity be taken. As they approach to delicacy, a nation is refined; as their conveniencies are multiplied, a nation, at least a commercial nation, must be denominated wealthy.

Finding nothing to detain us at Bamff, we set out in the morning, and, having breakfasted at Cullen, about noon came to Elgin, where, in the inn that we supposed the best, a dinner was set before us, which we could not eat. This was the first time, and, except one, the last, that I found any reason to complain of a Scottish table; and such disappointments, I suppose, must be expected in every country, where there is no great frequency of travellers.

The ruins of the cathedral of Elgin afforded us another proof of the waste of reformation. There is enough yet remaining to show, that it was once magnificent. Its whole plot is easily traced. On the north side of the choir, the chapter-house, which is roofed with an arch of stone, remains entire; and, on the south side, another mass of building, which we could not enter, is preserved by the care of the family of Gordon; but the body of the church is a mass of fragments.

A paper was here put into our hands, which deduced from sufficient authorities the history of this venerable

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ruin. The church of Elgin had, in the intestine tumults of the barbarous ages, been laid waste by the irruption of a Highland chief, whom the bishop had offended; but, it was gradually restored to the state of which the traces may be now discerned, and was at last, not destroyed by the tumultuous violence of Knox, but more shamefully suffered to dilapidate by deliberate robbery and frigid indifference. There is still extant, in the books of the council, an order, of which I cannot remember the date, but which was doubtless issued after the reformation, directing that the lead, which covers the two cathedrals of Elgin and Aberdeen, shall be taken away, and converted into money for the support of the army. A Scotch army was in those times very cheaply kept; yet the lead of two churches must have borne so small a proportion to any military expense, that it is hard not to believe the reason alleged to be merely popular, and the money intended for some private purse. The order, however, was obeyed; the two churches were stripped, and the lead was shipped to be sold in Holland. I hope every reader will rejoice that this cargo of sacrilege was lost at sea.

Let us not, however, make too much haste to despise our neighbours. Our own cathedrals are mouldering by unregarded dilapidation. It seems to be part of the despicable philosophy of the time to despise monuments of sacred magnificence, and we are in danger of doing that deliberately, which the Scots did not do, but in the unsettled state of an imperfect constitution.

Those who had once uncovered the cathedrals never wished to cover them again; and, being thus made useless, they were first neglected, and, perhaps, as the stone was wanted, afterwards demolished.

Elgin seems a place of little trade, and thinly inhabited. The episcopal cities of Scotland, I believe, generally fell with their churches, though some of them have since recovered by a situation convenient for commerce. Thus Glasgow, though it has no longer an archbishop, has risen beyond its original state by the opulence of its traders;

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and Aberdeen, though its ancient stock had decayed, flourishes by a new shoot in another place.

In the chief street of Elgin, the houses jut over the lowest story, like the old buildings of timber in London, but with greater prominence; so that there is sometimes a walk for a considerable length under a cloister, or portico, which is now indeed frequently broken, because the new houses have another form, but seems to have been uniformly continued in the old city.

We went forwards the same day to Fores, the town to which Macbeth was travelling, when he met the weird sisters in his way. This to an Englishman is classick ground. Our imaginations were heated, and our thoughts recalled to their old amusements.

We had now a prelude to the Highlands. We began to leave fertility and culture behind us, and saw for a great length of road nothing but heath; yet at Fochabars, a seat belonging to the duke of Gordon, there is an orchard, which in Scotland I had never seen before, with some timber-trees, and a plantation of oaks.

At Fores we found good accommodation, but nothing worthy of particular remark, and next morning entered upon the road, on which Macbeth heard the fatal prediction; but we travelled on not interrupted by promises of kingdoms, and came to Nairn, a royal burgh, which, if once it flourished, is now in a state of miserable decay; but I know not whether its chief annual magistrate has not still the title of lord provost.

At Nairn we may fix the verge of the Highlands; for here I first saw peat fires, and first heard the Erse language. We had no motive to stay longer than to breakfast, and went forward to the house of Mr. Macaulay, the minister who published an account of St. Kilda, and by his direction visited Calder castle, from which Macbeth drew his second title. It has been formerly a place of strength. The drawbridge is still to be seen, but the moat is now dry. The tower is very ancient. Its walls are of great thickness, arched on the top with stone, and surrounded with battle-

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ments. The rest of the house is later, though far from modern.

We were favoured by a gentleman, who lives in the castle, with a letter to one of the officers at Fort George, which, being the most regular fortification in the island, well deserves the notice of a traveller, who has never travelled before. We went thither next day, found a very kind reception, were led round the works by a gentleman, who explained the use of every part, and entertained by sir Eyre Coote, the governour, with such elegance of conversation, as left us no attention to the delicacies of his table.

Of Fort George, I shall not attempt to give any account. I cannot delineate it scientifically, and a loose and popular description is of use only when the imagination is to be amused. There was every where an appearance of the utmost neatness and regularity. But my suffrage is of little value, because this and Fort Augustus are the only garrisons that I ever saw.

We did not regret the time spent at the fort, though in consequence of our delay, we came somewhat late to Inverness, the town which may properly be called the capital of the Highlands. Hither the inhabitants of the inland parts come to be supplied with what they cannot make for themselves. Hither the young nymphs of the mountains and valleys are sent for education, and, as far as my observation has reached, are not sent in vain.

Inverness was the last place which had a regular communication by high roads with the southern counties. All the ways beyond it have, I believe, been made by the soldiers in this century. At Inverness, therefore, Cromwell, when he subdued Scotland, stationed a garrison, as at the boundary of the Highlands. The soldiers seem to have incorporated afterwards with the inhabitants, and to have peopled the place with an English race; for the language of this town has been long considered as peculiarly elegant.

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Here is a castle, called the castle of Macbeth, the walls of which are yet standing. It was no very capacious edifice, but stands upon a rock, so high and steep, that I think it was once not accessible, but by the help of ladders, or a bridge. Over against it, on another hill, was a fort built by Cromwell, now totally demolished; for no faction of Scotland loved the name of Cromwell, or had any desire to continue his memory.

Yet what the Romans did to other nations, was in a great degree done by Cromwell to the Scots; he civilized them by conquest, and introduced, by useful violence, the arts of peace. I was told at Aberdeen, that the people learned from Cromwell's soldiers to make shoes, and to plant kail.

How they lived without kail, it is not easy to guess: they cultivate hardly any other plant for common tables, and when they had not kail, they, probably, had nothing. The numbers that go barefoot are still sufficient to show that shoes may be spared: they are not yet considered as necessaries of life; for tall boys not otherwise meanly dressed, run without them in the streets; and in the islands the sons of gentlemen pass several of their first years with naked feet.

I know not whether it be not peculiar to the Scots to have attained the liberal, without the manual arts, to have excelled in ornamental knowledge, and to have wanted, not only the elegancies, but the conveniencies of common life. Literature, soon after its revival, found its way to Scotland, and from the middle of the sixteenth century, almost to the middle of the seventeenth, the politer studies were very diligently pursued. The Latin poetry of *Deliciæ Poetarum Scotorum* would have done honour to any nation; at least till the publication of May's Supplement, the English had very little to oppose.

Yet men thus ingenious and inquisitive were content to live in total ignorance of the trades by which human wants are supplied, and to supply them by the

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grossest means. Till the union made them acquainted with English manners, the culture of their lands was unskilful, and their domestick life unformed; their tables were coarse as the feasts of Eskimeaux, and their houses filthy as the cottages of Hottentots.

Since they have known that their condition was capable of improvement, their progress in useful knowledge has been rapid and uniform. What remains to be done they will quickly do, and then wonder, like me, why that which was so necessary and so easy was so long delayed. But they must be for ever content to owe to the English that elegance and culture, which, if they had been vigilant and active, perhaps the English might have owed to them.

Here the appearance of life began to alter. I had seen a few women with plaids at Aberdeen; but at Inverness the Highland manners are common. There is, I think, a kirk, in which only the Erse language is used. There is likewise an English chapel, but meanly built, where on Sunday we saw a very decent congregation.

We were now to bid farewell to the luxury of travelling, and to enter a country upon which, perhaps, no wheel has ever rolled. We could, indeed, have used our postchaise one day longer, along the military road to Fort Augustus, but we could have hired no horses beyond Inverness, and we were not so sparing of ourselves, as to lead them, merely that we might have one day longer the indulgence of a carriage.

At Inverness, therefore, we procured three horses for ourselves and a servant, and one more for our baggage, which was no very heavy load. We found in the course of our journey the convenience of having disencumbered ourselves, by laying aside whatever we could spare; for it is not to be imagined without experience, how in climbing crags, and treading bogs, and winding through narrow and obstructed passages, a little bulk will hinder, and a little weight will burden; or how often a man that has pleased himself at home with his own resolution, will, in

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the hour of darkness and fatigue, be content to leave behind him every thing but himself.

We took two Highlanders to run beside us, partly to show us the way, and partly to take back from the seaside the horses, of which they were the owners. One of them was a man of great liveliness and activity, of whom his companion said, that he would tire any horse in Inverness. Both of them were civil and ready-handed. Civility seems part of the national character of Highlanders. Every chieftain is a monarch, and politeness, the natural product of royal government, is diffused from the laird through the whole clan. But they are not commonly dexterous: their narrowness of life confines them to a few operations, and they are accustomed to endure little wants, more than to remove them.

We mounted our steeds on the thirteenth of August, and directed our guides to conduct us to Fort Augustus. It is built at the head of Lough Ness, of which Inverness stands at the outlet. The way between them has been cut by the soldiers, and the greater part of it runs along a rock, levelled with great labour and exactness, near the waterside.

Most of this day's journey was very pleasant. The day, though bright, was not hot; and the appearance of the country, if I had not seen the Peak, would have been wholly new. We went upon a surface so hard and level, that we had little care to hold the bridle, and were, therefore, at full leisure for contemplation. On the left were high and steep rocks, shaded with birch, the hardy native of the north, and covered with fern or heath. On the right the limpid waters of Lough Ness were beating their bank, and waving their surface by a gentle agitation. Beyond them were rocks sometimes covered with verdure, and sometimes towering in horrid nakedness. Now and then we espied a little corn-field, which served to impress more strongly the general barrenness.

Lough Ness is about twenty-four miles long, and from

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one mile to two miles broad. It is remarkable that Boethius, in his description of Scotland, gives it twelve miles of breadth. When historians or geographers exhibit false accounts of places far distant, they may be forgiven, because they can tell but what they are told; and that their accounts exceed the truth may be justly supposed, because most men exaggerate to others, if not to themselves; but Boethius lived at no great distance; if he never saw the lake, he must have been very incurious, and if he had seen it, his veracity yielded to very slight temptations.

Lough Ness, though not twelve miles broad, is a very remarkable diffusion of water, without islands. It fills a large hollow between two ridges of high rocks, being supplied, partly by the torrents, which fall into it on either side, and partly, as is supposed, by springs at the bottom. Its water is remarkably clear and pleasant, and is imagined by the natives to be medicinal. We were told, that it is in some places a hundred and forty fathoms deep, a profundity scarcely credible, and which probably those that relate it have never sounded. Its fish are salmon, trout, and pike.

It was said at Fort Augustus, that Lough Ness is open in the hardest winters, though a lake not far from it is covered with ice. In discussing these exceptions from the course of nature, the first question is, whether the fact be justly stated. That which is strange is delightful, and a pleasing errour is not willingly detected. Accuracy of narration is not very common, and there are few so rigidly philosophical, as not to represent as perpetual, what is only frequent, or as constant, what is really casual. If it be true that Lough Ness never freezes, it is either sheltered by its high banks from the cold blasts, and exposed only to those winds, which have more power to agitate than congeal, or it is kept in perpetual motion by the rush of streams from the rocks that enclose it. Its profundity, though it should be such as is represented, can have little part in this exemption; for though deep wells are not

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frozen, because their water is secluded from the external air, yet, where a wide surface is exposed to the full influence of a freezing atmosphere, I know not why the depth should keep it open. Natural philosophy is now one of the favourite studies of the Scottish nation, and Lough Ness well deserves to be diligently examined.

The road on which we travelled, and which was itself a source of entertainment, is made along the rock, in the direction of the lough, sometimes by breaking off protuberances, and sometimes by cutting the great mass of stone to a considerable depth. The fragments are piled in a loose wall on either side, with apertures left at very short spaces, to give a passage to the wintry currents. Part of it is bordered with low trees, from which our guides gathered nuts, and would have had the appearance of an English lane, except that an English lane is almost always dirty. It has been made with great labour, but has this advantage, that it cannot, without equal labour, be broken up.

Within our sight, there were goats feeding or playing. The mountains have red deer, but they came not within view; and if what is said of their vigilance and subtlety be true, they have some claim to that palm of wisdom, which the eastern philosopher, whom Alexander interrogated, gave to those beasts which live furthest from men.

Near the way, by the waterside, we espied a cottage. This was the first Highland hut that I had seen; and, as our business was with life and manners, we were willing to visit it. To enter a habitation without leave, seems to be not considered here as rudeness or intrusion. The old laws of hospitality still give this license to a stranger.

A hut is constructed with loose stones, ranged for the most part with some tendency to circularity. It must be placed where the wind cannot act upon it with violence, because it has no cement; and where the water will run easily away, because it has no floor but the naked ground. The wall, which is commonly about six feet

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high, declines from the perpendicular a little inward. Such rafters as can be procured are then raised for a roof, and covered with heath, which makes a strong and warm thatch, kept from flying off by ropes of twisted heath, of which the ends, reaching from the centre of the thatch to the top of the wall, are held firm by the weight of a large stone. No light is admitted but at the entrance, and through a hole in the thatch, which gives vent to the smoke. This hole is not directly over the fire, lest the rain should extinguish it; and the smoke, therefore, naturally fills the place before it escapes. Such is the general structure of the houses, in which one of the nations of this opulent and powerful island has been hitherto content to live. Huts, however, are not more uniform than palaces; and this, which we were inspecting, was very far from one of the meanest, for it was divided into several apartments; and its inhabitants possessed such property as a pastoral poet might exalt into riches.

When we entered, we found an old woman boiling goat's flesh in a kettle. She spoke little English, but we had interpreters at hand, and she was willing enough to display her whole system of economy. She has five children, of which none are yet gone from her. The eldest, a boy of thirteen, and her husband, who is eighty years old, were at work in the wood. Her two next sons were gone to Inverness, to buy *meal*, by which oatmeal is always meant. Meal she considered as expensive food, and told us, that in spring, when the goats gave milk, the children could live without it. She is mistress of sixty goats, and I saw many kids in an enclosure at the end of her house. She had also some poultry. By the lake, we saw a potatoe-garden, and a small spot of ground, on which stood four shocks, containing each twelve sheaves of barley. She has all this from the labour of their own hands, and, for what is necessary to be bought, her kids and her chickens are sent to market.

With the true pastoral hospitality, she asked us to sit down and drink whisky. She is religious, and though

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the kirk is four miles off, probably eight English miles, she goes thither every Sunday. We gave her a shilling, and she begged snuff; for snuff is the luxury of a Highland cottage.

Soon afterwards we came to the General's hut, so called because it was the temporary abode of Wade, while he superintended the works upon the road. It is now a house of entertainment for passengers, and we found it not ill stocked with provisions.

Towards evening we crossed, by a bridge, the river which makes the celebrated fall of Fiers. The country, at the bridge, strikes the imagination with all the gloom and grandeur of Siberian solitude. The way makes a flexure, and the mountains, covered with trees, rise at once on the left hand and in the front. We desired our guides to show us the fall, and, dismounting, clambered over very rugged crags, till I began to wish that our curiosity might have been gratified with less trouble and danger. We came, at last, to a place where we could overlook the river, and saw a channel torn, as it seems, through black piles of stone, by which the stream is obstructed and broken, till it comes to a very steep descent, of such dreadful depth, that we were naturally inclined to turn aside our eyes.

But we visited the place at an unseasonable time, and found it divested of its dignity and terrour. Nature never gives every thing at once. A long continuance of dry weather, which made the rest of the way easy and delightful, deprived us of the pleasure expected from the fall of Fiers. The river, having now no water but what the springs supply, showed us only a swift current, clear and shallow, fretting over the asperities of the rocky bottom; and we were left to exercise our thoughts, by endeavouring to conceive the effect of a thousand streams, poured from the mountains into one channel, struggling for expansion in a narrow passage, exasperated by rocks rising in their way, and, at last, discharging all their violence of waters, by a sudden fall through the horrid chasm.

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The way now grew less easy, descending by an uneven declivity, but without either dirt or danger. We did not arrive at Fort Augustus till it was late. Mr. Boswell, who, between his father's merit and his own, is sure of reception wherever he comes, sent a servant before to beg admission and entertainment for that night. Mr. Trapaud, the governour, treated us with that courtesy which is so closely connected with the military character. He came out to meet us beyond the gates, and apologized that, at so late an hour, the rules of a garrison suffered him to give us entrance only at the postern.

In the morning we viewed the fort, which is much less than that of St. George, and is said to be commanded by the neighbouring hills. It was not long ago taken by the Highlanders. But its situation seems well chosen for pleasure, if not for strength; it stands at the head of the lake, and, by a sloop of sixty tuns, is supplied from Inverness with great convenience.

We were now to cross the Highlands, towards the western coast, and to content ourselves with such accommodations, as a way so little frequented could afford. The journey was not formidable, for it was but of two days, very unequally divided, because the only house, where we could be entertained, was not further off than a third of the way. We soon came to a high hill, which we mounted by a military road, cut in traverses, so that, as we went upon a higher stage, we saw the baggage following us below in a contrary direction. To make this way, the rock has been hewn to a level, with labour that might have broken the perseverance of a Roman legion.

The country is totally denuded of its wood, but the stumps, both of oaks and firs, which are still found, show that it has been once a forest of large timber. I do not remember that we saw any animals, but we were told that, in the mountains, there are stags, roebucks, goats, and rabbits.

We did not perceive that this tract was possessed by human beings, except that once we saw a corn-field, in

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which a lady was walking with some gentlemen. Their house was certainly at no great distance, but so situated that we could not descry it.

Passing on through the dreariness of solitude, we found a party of soldiers from the fort, working on the road, under the superintendence of a sergeant. We told them how kindly we had been treated at the garrison, and, as we were enjoying the benefit of their labours, begged leave to show our gratitude by a small present.

Early in the afternoon we came to Anoch, a village in Glenmollison of three huts, one of which is distinguished by a chimney. Here we were to dine and lodge, and were conducted through the first room, that had the chimney, into another lighted by a small glass window. The landlord attended us with great civility, and told us what he could give us to eat and drink. I found some books on a shelf, among which were a volume or more of Prideaux's Connexion.

This I mentioned as something unexpected, and perceived that I did not please him. I praised the propriety of his language, and was answered that I need not wonder, for he had learned it by grammar.

By subsequent opportunities of observation, I found that my host's diction had nothing peculiar. Those Highlanders that can speak English, commonly speak it well, with few of the words, and little of the tone, by which a Scotchman is distinguished. Their language seems to have been learned in the army or the navy, or by some communication with those, who could give them good examples of accent and pronunciation. By their Lowland neighbours they would not willingly be taught; for they have long considered them as a mean and degenerate race. These prejudices are wearing fast away; but so much of them still remains, that, when I asked a very learned minister in the islands, which they considered as their most savage clans: "Those," said he, "that live next the Lowlands."

As we came hither early in the day, we had time suf-

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ficient to survey the place. The house was built, like other huts, of loose stones; but the part in which we dined and slept, was lined with turf, and wattled with twigs, which kept the earth from falling. Near it was a garden of turnips, and a field of potatoes. It stands in a glen, or valley, pleasantly watered by a winding river. But this country, however it may delight the gazer, or amuse the naturalist, is of no great advantage to its owners. Our landlord told us of a gentleman who possesses lands, eighteen Scotch miles in length, and three in breadth; a space containing, at least, a hundred square English miles. He has raised his rents, to the danger of depopulating his farms, and he fells his timber, and, by exerting every art of augmentation, has obtained a yearly revenue of four hundred pounds, which, for a hundred square miles, is three halfpence an acre.

Some time after dinner we were surprised by the entrance of a young woman, not inelegant either in mien or dress, who asked us whether we would have tea. We found that she was the daughter of our host, and desired her to make it. Her conversation, like her appearance, was gentle and pleasing. We knew that the girls of the Highlands are all gentlewomen, and treated her with great respect, which she received as customary and due, and was neither elated by it, nor confused, but repaid my civilities without embarrassment, and told me how much I honoured her country, by coming to survey it.

She had been at Inverness to gain the common female qualifications, and had, like her father, the English pronunciation. I presented her with a book, which I happened to have about me, and should not be pleased to think that she forgets me.

In the evening the soldiers, whom we had passed on the road, came to spend at our inn the little money that we had given them. They had the true military impatience of coin in their pockets, and had marched at least six miles to find the first place where liquor could be bought. Having never been before in a place so wild and unfre-

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quented, I was glad of their arrival, because I knew that we had made them friends; and to gain still more of their goodwill, we went to them, where they were carousing in the barn, and added something to our former gift. All that we gave was not much, but it detained them in the barn, either merry or quarrelling, the whole night, and in the morning they went back to their work, with great indignation at the bad qualities of whisky.

We had gained so much the favour of our host, that, when we left his house in the morning, he walked by us a great way, and entertained us with conversation, both on his own condition, and that of the country. His life seemed to be merely pastoral, except that he differed from some of the ancient Nomades in having a settled dwelling. His wealth consists of one hundred sheep, as many goats, twelve milk-cows, and twenty-eight beeves ready for the drover.

From him we first heard of the general dissatisfaction, which is now driving the Highlanders into the other hemisphere; and when I asked him whether they would stay at home, if they were well treated, he answered with indignation, that no man willingly left his native country. Of the farm, which he himself occupied, the rent had, in twenty-five years, been advanced from five to twenty pounds, which he found himself so little able to pay, that he would be glad to try his fortune in some other place. Yet, he owned the reasonableness of raising the Highland rents in a certain degree, and declared himself willing to pay ten pounds for the ground which he had formerly had for five.

Our host having amused us for a time, resigned us to our guides. The journey of this day was long, not that the distance was great, but that the way was difficult. We were now in the bosom of the Highlands, with full leisure to contemplate the appearance and properties of mountainous regions, such as have been, in many countries, the last shelters of national distress, and are every

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where the scenes of adventures, stratagems, surprises, and escapes.

Mountainous countries are not passed but with difficulty, not merely from the labour of climbing; for to climb is not always necessary: but because, that which is not mountain is commonly bog, through which the way must be picked with caution. Where there are hills, there is much rain, and the torrents, pouring down into the intermediate spaces, seldom find so ready an outlet, as not to stagnate, till they have broken the texture of the ground.

Of the hills, which our journey offered to the view on either side, we did not take the height, nor did we see any that astonished us with their loftiness. Towards the summit of one, there was a white spot, which I should have called a naked rock, but the guides, who had better eyes, and were acquainted with the phænomena of the country, declared it to be snow. It had already lasted to the end of August, and was likely to maintain its contest with the sun, till it should be reinforced by winter.

The height of mountains, philosophically considered, is properly computed from the surface of the next sea; but, as it affects the eye or imagination of the passenger, as it makes either a spectacle or an obstruction, it must be reckoned from the place where the rise begins to make a considerable angle with the plain. In extensive continents the land may, by gradual elevation, attain great height, without any other appearance than that of a plain gently inclined, and if a hill, placed upon such raised ground, be described, as having its altitude equal to the whole space above the sea, the representation will be fallacious.

These mountains may be properly enough measured from the inland base; for it is not much above the sea. As we advanced at evening towards the western coast, I did not observe the declivity to be greater than is necessary for the discharge of the inland waters.

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We passed many rivers and rivulets, which commonly ran, with a clear shallow stream, over a hard pebbly bottom. These channels, which seem so much wider than the water that they convey would naturally require, are formed by the violence of wintry floods, produced by the accumulation of innumerable streams that fall in rainy weather from the hills, and, bursting away with resistless impetuosity, make themselves a passage proportionate to their mass.

Such capricious and temporary waters cannot be expected to produce many fish. The rapidity of the wintry deluge sweeps them away, and the scantiness of the summer stream would hardly sustain them above the ground. This is the reason why, in fording the northern rivers, no fishes are seen, as in England, wandering in the water.

Of the hills many may be called, with Homer's Ida, abundant in springs; but few can deserve the epithet which he bestows upon Pelion by waving their leaves. They exhibit very little variety; being almost wholly covered with dark heath, and even that seems to be checked in its growth. What is not heath is nakedness, a little diversified by now and then a stream rushing down the steep. An eye, accustomed to flowery pastures and waving harvests, is astonished and repelled by this wide extent of hopeless sterility. The appearance is that of matter incapable of form or usefulness, dismissed by nature from her care, and disinherited of her favours, left in its original elemental state, or quickened only with one sullen power of useless vegetation.

It will very readily occur, that this uniformity of barrenness can afford very little amusement to the traveller; that it is easy to sit at home and conceive rocks, and heath, and waterfalls; and that these journeys are useless labours, which neither impregnate the imagination, nor enlarge the understanding. It is true, that of far the greater part of things, we must content ourselves with such knowledge as description may exhibit, or analogy supply;

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but it is true, likewise, that these ideas are always incomplete, and that, at least, till we have compared them with realities, we do not know them to be just. As we see more, we become possessed of more certainties, and, consequently, gain more principles of reasoning, and found a wider basis of analogy.

Regions, mountainous and wild, thinly inhabited, and little cultivated, make a great part of the earth, and he that has never seen them, must live unacquainted with much of the face of nature, and with one of the great scenes of human existence.

As the day advanced towards noon, we entered a narrow valley, not very flowery, but sufficiently verdant. Our guides told us, that the horses could not travel all day without rest or meat, and entreated us to stop here, because no grass would be found in any other place. The request was reasonable, and the argument cogent. We, therefore, willingly dismounted, and diverted ourselves as the place gave us opportunity.

I sat down on a bank, such as a writer of romance might have delighted to feign. I had, indeed, no trees to whisper over my head, but a clear rivulet streamed at my feet. The day was calm, the air was soft, and all was rudeness, silence, and solitude. Before me, and on either side, were high hills, which, by hindering the eye from ranging, forced the mind to find entertainment for itself. Whether I spent the hour well I know not; for here I first conceived the thought of this narration.

We were in this place at ease and by choice, and had no evils to suffer or to fear; yet the imaginations excited by the view of an unknown and untravelled wilderness are not such as arise in the artificial solitude of parks and gardens, a flattering notion of self-sufficiency, a placid indulgence of voluntary delusions, a secure expansion of the fancy, or a cool concentration of the mental powers. The phantoms which haunt a desert are want, and misery, and danger; the evils of dereliction rush upon the thoughts; man is made unwillingly acquainted with his

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own weakness, and meditation shows him only how little he can sustain, and how little he can perform. There were no traces of inhabitants, except, perhaps, a rude pile of clods, called a summer hut, in which a herdsman had rest in the favourable seasons. Whoever had been in the place where I then sat, unprovided with provisions, and ignorant of the country, might, at least before the roads were made, have wandered among the rocks, till he had perished with hardship, before he could have found either food or shelter. Yet what are these hillocks to the ridges of Taurus, or these spots of wildness to the deserts of America?

It was not long before we were invited to mount, and continued our journey along the side of a lough, kept full by many streams, which, with more or less rapidity and noise, crossed the road from the hills on the other hand. These currents, in their diminished state, after several dry months, afford, to one who has always lived in level countries, an unusual and delightful spectacle; but in the rainy season, such as every winter may be expected to bring, must precipitate an impetuous and tremendous flood. I suppose the way by which we went, is, at that time, impassable.

The lough at last ended in a river, broad and shallow, like the rest, but, that it may be passed when it is deeper, there is a bridge over it. Beyond it is a valley, called Glensheals, inhabited by the clan of Macrae. Here we found a village, called Auknasheals, consisting of many huts, perhaps twenty, built all of *dry-stone*, that is, stones piled up without mortar.

We had, by the direction of the officers at Fort Augustus, taken bread for ourselves, and tobacco for those Highlanders who might show us any kindness. We were now at a place where we could obtain milk, but, must have wanted bread, if we had not brought it. The people of this valley did not appear to know any English, and our guides now became doubly necessary as interpreters. A woman, whose hut was distinguished by greater spacious-

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ness, and better architecture, brought out some pails of milk. The villagers gathered about us in considerable numbers, I believe without any evil intention, but with a very savage wildness of aspect and manner. When our meal was over, Mr. Boswell sliced the bread, and divided it amongst them, as he supposed them never to have tasted a wheaten loaf before. He then gave them little pieces of twisted tobacco, and, among the children, we distributed a small handful of halfpence, which they received with great eagerness. Yet, I have been since told, that the people of that valley are not indigent; and when we mentioned them afterwards, as needy and pitiable, a Highland lady let us know, that we might spare our commiseration; for the dame, whose milk we drank, had probably more than a dozen milk-cows. She seemed unwilling to take any price, but, being pressed to make a demand, at last named a shilling. Honesty is not greater where elegance is less. One of the by-standers, as we were told afterwards, advised her to ask more, but she said a shilling was enough. We gave her half-a-crown, and I hope got some credit by our behaviour; for the company said, if our interpreters did not flatter us, that they had not seen such a day, since the old laird of Macleod passed through their country.

The Macraes, as we heard afterwards in the Hebrides, were originally an indigent and subordinate clan, and having no farms nor stock, were in great numbers servants to the Maclellans, who, in the war of Charles the first, took arms at the call of the heroick Montrose, and were, in one of his battles, almost all destroyed. The women, that were left at home, being thus deprived of their husbands, like the Scythian ladies of old, married their servants, and the Macraes became a considerable race.

As we continued our journey, we were at leisure to extend our speculations, and to investigate the reason of those peculiarities, by which such rugged regions, as these before us, are generally distinguished.

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Mountainous countries commonly contain the original, at least the oldest race of inhabitants, for they are not easily conquered, because they must be entered by narrow ways, exposed to every power of mischief from those that occupy the heights; and every new ridge is a new fortress, where the defendants have again the same advantages. If the assailants either force the strait, or storm the summit, they gain only so much ground; their enemies are fled to take possession of the next rock, and the pursuers stand at gaze, knowing neither where the ways of escape wind among the steeps, nor where the bog has firmness to sustain them: besides that, mountaineers have an agility in climbing and descending, distinct from strength or courage, and attainable only by use.

If the war be not soon concluded, the invaders are dislodged by hunger; for in those anxious and toilsome marches, provisions cannot easily be carried, and are never to be found. The wealth of mountains is cattle, which, while the men stand in the passes, the women drive away. Such lands, at last, cannot repay the expense of conquest, and, therefore, perhaps, have not been so often invaded by the mere ambition of dominion, as by resentment of robberies and insults, or the desire of enjoying in security the more fruitful provinces.

As mountaineers are long before they are conquered, they are likewise long before they are civilized. Men are softened by intercourse mutually profitable, and instructed by comparing their own notions with those of others. Thus Cæsar found the maritime parts of Britain made less barbarous by their commerce with the Gauls. Into a barren and rough tract no stranger is brought, either by the hope of gain or of pleasure. The inhabitants, having neither commodities for sale, nor money for purchase, seldom visit more polished places, or, if they do visit them, seldom return.

It sometimes happens that by conquest, intermixture, or gradual refinement, the cultivated parts of a country change their language. The mountaineers then become a

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distinct nation, cut off, by dissimilitude of speech, from conversation with their neighbours. Thus, in Biscay, the original Cantabrian, and in Dalecarlia, the old Swedish still subsists. Thus Wales and the Highlands speak the tongue of the first inhabitants of Britain, while the other parts have received first the Saxon, and in some degree afterwards the French, and then formed a third language between them.

That the primitive manners are continued where the primitive language is spoken, no nation will desire me to suppose, for the manners of mountaineers are commonly savage, but they are rather produced by their situation than derived from their ancestors.

Such seems to be the disposition of man, that whatever makes a distinction produces rivalry. England, before other causes of enmity were found, was disturbed, for some centuries, by the contests of the northern and southern counties; so that at Oxford, the peace of study could for a long time be preserved, only by choosing annually one of the proctors from each side of the Trent. A tract, intersected by many ridges of mountains, naturally divides its inhabitants into petty nations, which are made, by a thousand causes, enemies to each other. Each will exalt its own chiefs, each will boast the valour of its men, or the beauty of its women, and every claim of superiority irritates competition; injuries will sometimes be done, and be more injuriously defended; retaliation will sometimes be attempted, and the debt exacted with too much interest.

In the Highlands it was a law, that if a robber was sheltered from justice, any man of the same clan might be taken in his place. This was a kind of irregular justice, which, though necessary in savage times, could hardly fail to end in a feud; and a feud once kindled among an idle people, with no variety of pursuits to divert their thoughts, burnt on for ages, either sullenly glowing in secret mischief, or openly blazing into public violence. Of the effects of this violent judicature, there are not

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wanting memorials. The cave is now to be seen to which one of the Campbells, who had injured the Macdonalds, retired with a body of his own clan. The Macdonalds required the offender, and being refused, made a fire at the mouth of the cave by which he and his adherents were suffocated together.

Mountaineers are warlike, because by their feuds and competitions they consider themselves as surrounded with enemies, and are always prepared to repel incursions, or to make them. Like the Greeks in their unpolished state, described by Thucydides, the Highlanders, till lately, went always armed, and carried their weapons to visits, and to church.

Mountaineers are thievish, because they are poor, and having neither manufactures nor commerce, can grow richer only by robbery. They regularly plunder their neighbours, for their neighbours are commonly their enemies; and having lost that reverence for property, by which the order of civil life is preserved, soon consider all as enemies whom they do not reckon as friends, and think themselves licensed to invade whatever they are not obliged to protect.

By a strict administration of the laws, since the laws have been introduced into the Highlands, this disposition to thievery is very much repressed. Thirty years ago, no herd had ever been conducted through the mountains without paying tribute in the night to some of the clans; but cattle are now driven, and passengers travel, without danger, fear, or molestation.

Among a warlike people, the quality of highest esteem is personal courage, and with the ostentatious display of courage are closely connected promptitude of offence, and quickness of resentment. The Highlanders, before they were disarmed, were so addicted to quarrels, that the boys used to follow any publick procession or ceremony, however festive, or however solemn, in expectation of the battle, which was sure to happen before the company dispersed.

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Mountainous regions are sometimes so remote from the seat of government, and so difficult of access, that they are very little under the influence of the sovereign, or within the reach of national justice. Law is nothing without power; and the sentence of a distant court could not be easily executed, nor perhaps very safely promulgated, among men, ignorantly proud and habitually violent, unconnected with the general system, and accustomed to reverence only their own lords. It has, therefore, been necessary to erect many particular jurisdictions, and commit the punishment of crimes, and the decision of right, to the proprietors of the country who could enforce their own decrees. It immediately appears that such judges will be often ignorant, and often partial; but in the immaturity of political establishments no better expedient could be found. As government advances towards perfection, provincial judicature is perhaps in every empire gradually abolished.

Those who had thus the dispensation of law, were, by consequence, themselves lawless. Their vassals had no shelter from outrages and oppressions; but were condemned to endure, without resistance, the caprices of wantonness and the rage of cruelty.

In the Highlands, some great lords had an hereditary jurisdiction over counties; and some chieftains over their own lands; till the final conquest of the Highlands afforded an opportunity of crushing all the local courts, and of extending the general benefits of equal law to the low and the high, in the deepest recesses and obscurest corners.

While the chiefs had this resemblance of royalty, they had little inclination to appeal, on any question, to superiour judicatures. A claim of lands between two powerful lairds was decided like a contest for dominion between sovereign powers. They drew their forces into the field, and right attended on the strongest. This was, in ruder times, the common practice, which the kings of Scotland could seldom control.

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Even so lately as in the last years of king William, a battle was fought at Mull Roy, on a plain a few miles to the south of Inverness, between the clans of Mackintosh and Macdonald of Keppoch. Colonel Macdonald, the head of a small clan, refused to pay the dues demanded from him by Mackintosh, as his superiour lord. They disdained the interposition of judges and laws, and calling each his followers to maintain the dignity of the clan, fought a formal battle, in which several considerable men fell on the side of Mackintosh, without a complete victory to either. This is said to have been the last open war made between the clans by their own authority.

The Highland lords made treaties, and formed alliances, of which some traces may still be found, and some consequences still remain as lasting evidences of petty regality. The terms of one of these confederacies were, that each should support the other in the right, or in the wrong, except against the king.

The inhabitants of mountains form distinct races, and are careful to preserve their genealogies. Men in a small district, necessarily mingle blood by intermarriages, and combine at last into one family, with a common interest in the honour and disgrace of every individual. Then begins that union of affections, and cooperation of endeavours, that constitute a clan. They who consider themselves as ennobled by their family, will think highly of their progenitors, and they who, through successive generations, live always together in the same place, will preserve local stories and hereditary prejudices. Thus, every Highlander can talk of his ancestors, and recount the outrages which they suffered from the wicked inhabitants of the next valley.

Such are the effects of habitation among mountains, and such were the qualities of the Highlanders, while their rocks secluded them from the rest of mankind, and kept them an unaltered and discriminated race. They are now losing their distinction, and hastening to mingle with the general community.

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We left Auknasheals and the Macraes in the afternoon, and in the evening came to Ratiken, a high hill on which a road is cut, but so steep and narrow that it is very difficult. There is now a design of making another way round the bottom. Upon one of the precipices, my horse, weary with the steepness of the rise, staggered a little, and I called in haste to the Highlander to hold him. This was the only moment of my journey, in which I thought myself endangered.

Having surmounted the hill at last, we were told, that at Glenelg, on the seaside, we should come to a house of lime and slate and glass. This image of magnificence raised our expectation. At last we came to our inn, weary and peevish, and began to enquire for meat and beds.

Of the provisions the negative catalogue was very copious. Here was no meat, no milk, no bread, no eggs, no wine. We did not express much satisfaction. Here, however, we were to stay. Whisky we might have, and I believe at last they caught a fowl and killed it. We had some bread, and with that we prepared ourselves to be contented, when we had a very eminent proof of Highland hospitality. Along some miles of the way, in the evening, a gentleman's servant had kept us company on foot with very little notice on our part. He left us near Glenelg, and we thought on him no more till he came to us again, in about two hours, with a present from his master of rum and sugar. The man had mentioned his company, and the gentleman, whose name, I think, is Gordon, well knowing the penury of the place, had this attention to two men, whose names perhaps he had not heard, by whom his kindness was not likely to be ever repaid, and who could be recommended to him only by their necessities.

We were now to examine our lodging. Out of one of the beds, on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge. Other circumstances of no elegant recital, concurred to disgust us. We had been frighted by a lady at Edinburgh, with discouraging representations of Highland lodgings. Sleep,

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however, was necessary. Our Highlanders had at last found some hay, with which the inn could not supply them. I directed them to bring a bundle into the room, and slept upon it in my riding coat. Mr. Boswell, being more delicate, laid himself sheets with hay over and under him, and lay in linen like a gentleman.

In the morning, September the twentieth, we found ourselves on the edge of the sea. Having procured a boat, we dismissed our Highlanders, whom I would recommend to the service of any future travellers, and were ferried over to the isle of Sky. We landed at Armidel, where we were met on the sands by sir Alexander Macdonald, who was at that time there with his lady, preparing to leave the island, and reside at Edinburgh.

Armidel is a neat house, built where the Macdonalds had once a seat, which was burnt in the commotions that followed the revolution. The walled orchard, which belonged to the former house, still remains. It is well shaded by tall ash-trees, of a species, as Mr. Janes the fossilist informed me, uncommonly valuable. This plantation is very properly mentioned by Dr. Campbell, in his new account of the state of Britain, and deserves attention; because it proves that the present nakedness of the Hebrides is not wholly the fault of nature.

As we sat at sir Alexander's table, we were entertained, according to the ancient usage of the north, with the melody of the bagpipe. Every thing in those countries has its history. As the bagpiper was playing, an elderly gentleman informed us, that in some remote time, the Macdonalds of Glengary having been injured, or offended by the inhabitants of Culloden, and resolving to have justice or vengeance, came to Culloden on a Sunday, where, finding their enemies at worship, they shut them up in the church, which they set on fire: "and this," said he, "is the tune which the piper played while they were burning."

Narrations like this, however uncertain, deserve the notice of a traveller, because they are the only records of a nation that has no historians, and afford the most genuine

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representation of the life and character of the ancient Highlanders.

Under the denomination of Highlander are comprehended, in Scotland all that now speak the Erse language, or retain the primitive manners, whether they live among the mountains, or in the islands; and in that sense I use the name, when there is not some apparent reason for making a distinction.

In Sky I first observed the use of brogues, a kind of artless shoes, stitched with thongs so loosely, that though they defend the foot from stones, they do not exclude water. Brogues were formerly made of raw hides, with the hair inwards, and such are, perhaps, still used in rude and remote parts; but they are said not to last above two days. Where life is somewhat improved, they are now made of leather, tanned with oak-bark, as in other places, or with the bark of birch, or roots of tormentil, a substance recommended in defect of bark, about forty years ago, to the Irish tanners, by one to whom the parliament of that kingdom voted a reward. The leather of Sky is not completely penetrated by vegetable matter, and therefore cannot be very durable.

My inquiries about brogues gave me an early specimen of Highland information. One day I was told, that to make brogues was a domestick art, which every man practised for himself, and that a pair of brogues was the work of an hour. I supposed that the husband made brogues as the wife made an apron, till next day it was told me, that a brogue-maker was a trade, and that a pair would cost half-a-crown. It will easily occur that these representations may both be true, and that, in some places, men may buy them, and in others make them for themselves; but I had both the accounts in the same house within two days.

Many of my subsequent inquiries upon more interesting topicks ended in the like uncertainty. He that travels in the Highlands may easily saturate his soul with intelligence, if he will acquiesce in the first account. The High-

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lander gives to every question an answer so prompt and peremptory, that skepticism itself is dared into silence, and the mind sinks before the bold reporter in unresisting credulity; but if a second question be ventured, it breaks the enchantment; for it is immediately discovered, that what was told so confidently was told at hazard, and that such fearlessness of assertion was either the sport of negligence, or the refuge of ignorance.

If individuals are thus at variance with themselves, it can be no wonder that the accounts of different men are contradictory. The traditions of an ignorant and savage people have been for ages negligently heard, and unskilfully related. Distant events must have been mingled together, and the actions of one man given to another. These, however, are deficiencies in story, for which no man is now to be censured. It were enough, if what there is yet opportunity of examining were accurately inspected and justly represented; but such is the laxity of Highland conversation, that the inquirer is kept in continual suspense, and, by a kind of intellectual retrogradation, knows less as he hears more.

In the islands the plaid is rarely worn. The law by which the Highlanders have been obliged to change the form of their dress, has, in all the places that we have visited, been universally obeyed. I have seen only one gentleman completely clothed in the ancient habit, and by him it was worn only occasionally and wantonly. The common people do not think themselves under any legal necessity of having coats; for they say, that the law against plaids was made by lord Hardwicke, and was in force only for his life: but the same poverty that made it then difficult for them to change their clothing, hinders them now from changing it again.

The fillibeg, or lower garment, is still very common, and the bonnet almost universal; but their attire is such as produces, in a sufficient degree, the effect intended by the law, of abolishing the dissimilitude of appearance between the Highlanders and the other inhabitants of Bri-

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tain; and, if dress be supposed to have much influence, facilitates their coalition with their fellow-subjects.

What we have long used we naturally like; and therefore the Highlanders were unwilling to lay aside their plaid, which yet to an unprejudiced spectator must appear an incommodious and cumbersome dress; for hanging loose upon the body, it must flutter in a quick motion, or require one of the hands to keep it close. The Romans always laid aside the gown when they had any thing to do. It was a dress so unsuitable to war, that the same word which signified a gown signified peace. The chief use of a plaid seems to be this, that they could commodiously wrap themselves in it when they were obliged to sleep without a better cover.

In our passage from Scotland to Sky, we were wet, for the first time, with a shower. This was the beginning of the Highland winter, after which we were told that a succession of three dry days was not to be expected for many months. The winter of the Hebrides consists of little more than rain and wind. As they are surrounded by an ocean never frozen, the blasts that come to them over the water are too much softened to have the power of congelation. The salt loughs, or inlets of the sea, which shoot very far into the island, never have any ice upon them, and the pools of fresh water will never bear the walker. The snow that sometimes falls, is soon dissolved by the air, or the rain.

This is not the description of a cruel climate, yet the dark months are here a time of great distress; because the summer can do little more than feed itself, and winter comes with its cold and its scarcity upon families very slenderly provided.

The third or fourth day after our arrival at Armidel, brought us an invitation to the isle of Raasay, which lies east of Sky. It is incredible how soon the account of any event is propagated in these narrow countries by the love of talk, which much leisure produces, and the relief given to the mind in the penury of insular conversation by a

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new topick. The arrival of strangers at a place so rarely visited, excites rumour, and quickens curiosity. I know not whether we touched at any corner, where fame had not already prepared us a reception.

To gain a commodious passage to Raasay, it was necessary to pass over a large part of Sky. We were furnished, therefore, with horses and a guide. In the islands there are no roads, nor any marks by which a stranger may find his way. The horseman has always at his side a native of the place, who, by pursuing game, or tending cattle, or being often employed in messages or conduct, has learned where the ridge of the hill has breadth sufficient to allow a horse and his rider a passage, and where the moss or bog is hard enough to bear them. The bogs are avoided as toilsome at least, if not unsafe, and, therefore, the journey is made generally from precipice to precipice; from which if the eye ventures to look down, it sees below a gloomy cavity, whence the rush of water is sometimes heard.

But there seems to be in all this more alarm than danger. The Highlander walks carefully before, and the horse, accustomed to the ground, follows him with little deviation. Sometimes the hill is too steep for the horseman to keep his seat, and sometimes the moss is too tremulous to bear the double weight of horse and man. The rider then dismounts, and all shift as they can.

Journeys made in this manner are rather tedious, than long. A very few miles require several hours. From Armidel we came at night to Coriatachan, a house very pleasantly situated between two brooks, with one of the highest hills of the island behind it. It is the residence of Mr. Mackinnon, by whom we were treated with very liberal hospitality, among a more numerous and elegant company than it could have been supposed easy to collect.

The hill behind the house we did not climb. The weather was rough, and the height and steepness discouraged us. We were told that there is a cairne upon it. A cairne is a heap of stones thrown upon the grave of one

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eminent for dignity of birth, or splendour of achievements. It is said, that by digging, an urn is always found under these cairnes; they must, therefore, have been thus piled by a people whose custom was to burn the dead. To pile stones is, I believe, a northern custom, and to burn the body was the Roman practice; nor do I know when it was that these two acts of sepulture were united.

The weather was next day too violent for the continuation of our journey; but we had no reason to complain of the interruption. We saw in every place, what we chiefly desired to know, the manners of the people. We had company, and if we had chosen retirement, we might have had books.

I never was in any house of the islands, where I did not find books in more languages than one, if I staid long enough to want them, except one from which the family was removed. Literature is not neglected by the higher rank of the Hebridians.

It need not, I suppose, be mentioned, that in countries so little frequented as the islands, there are no houses where travellers are entertained for money. He that wanders about these wilds, either procures recommendations to those whose habitations lie near his way, or, when night and weariness come upon him, takes the chance of general hospitality. If he finds only a cottage, he can expect little more than shelter; for the cottagers have little more for themselves: but if his good fortune brings him to the residence of a gentleman, he will be glad of a storm to prolong his stay. There is, however, one inn by the seaside at Sconsor, in Sky, where the post-office is kept.

At the tables, where a stranger is received, neither plenty nor delicacy is wanting. A tract of land so thinly inhabited must have much wild fowl; and I scarcely remember to have seen a dinner without them. The moor-game is every where to be had. That the sea abounds with fish, needs not to be told, for it supplies a great part

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of Europe. The isle of Sky has stags and roebucks, but no hares. They send very numerous droves of oxen yearly to England, and, therefore, cannot be supposed to want beef at home. Sheep and goats are in great numbers, and they have the common domestick fowls.

But as here is nothing to be bought, every family must kill its own meat, and roast part of it somewhat sooner than Apicius would prescribe. Every kind of flesh is undoubtedly excelled by the variety and emulation of English markets; but that which is not best may be yet very far from bad, and he that shall complain of his fare in the Hebrides, has improved his delicacy more than his manhood.

Their fowls are not like those plumped for sale by the poulterers of London, but they are as good as other places commonly afford, except that the geese, by feeding in the sea, have universally a fishy rankness.

These geese seem to be of a middle race, between the wild and domestick kinds. They are so tame as to own a home, and so wild as sometimes to fly quite away.

Their native bread is made of oats, or barley. Of oatmeal they spread very thin cakes, coarse and hard, to which unaccustomed palates are not easily reconciled. The barley cakes are thicker and softer; I began to eat them without unwillingness; the blackness of their colour raises some dislike, but the taste is not disagreeable. In most houses there is wheat flower, with which we were sure to be treated, if we staid long enough to have it kneaded and baked. As neither yeast nor leaven are used among them, their bread of every kind is unfermented. They make only cakes, and never mould a loaf.

A man of the Hebrides, for of the women's diet I can give no account, as soon as he appears in the morning, swallows a glass of whisky; yet they are not a drunken race, at least I never was present at much intemperance; but no man is so abstemious as to refuse the morning dram, which they call a *skalk*.

The word *whisky* signifies water, and is applied by way of eminence to *strong water*, or distilled liquor. The spirit

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drunk in the north is drawn from barley. I never tasted it, except once for experiment at the inn in Inverary, when I thought it preferable to any English malt brandy. It was strong but not pungent, and was free from the empyreumatick taste or smell. What was the process I had no opportunity of inquiring, nor do I wish to improve the art of making poison pleasant.

Not long after the dram, may be expected the breakfast, a meal in which the Scots, whether of the lowlands or mountains, must be confessed to excel us. The tea and coffee are accompanied not only with butter, but with honey, conserves, and marmalades. If an epicure could remove by a wish, in quest of sensual gratifications, wherever he had supped he would breakfast in Scotland.

In the islands, however, they do what I found it not very easy to endure. They pollute the tea-table by plates piled with large slices of Cheshire cheese, which mingles its less grateful odours with the fragrance of the tea.

Where many questions are to be asked, some will be omitted. I forgot to inquire how they were supplied with so much exotick luxury. Perhaps the French may bring them wine for wool, and the Dutch give them tea and coffee at the fishing season, in exchange for fresh provision. Their trade is unconstrained; they pay no customs, for there is no officer to demand them; whatever, therefore, is made dear only by impost, is obtained here at an easy rate.

A dinner in the Western Islands differs very little from a dinner in England, except that, in the place of tarts, there are always set different preparations of milk. This part of their diet will admit some improvement. Though they have milk, and eggs, and sugar, few of them know how to compound them in a custard. Their gardens afford them no great variety, but they have always some vegetables on the table. Potatoes, at least, are never wanting, which, though they have not known them long, are

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now one of the principal parts of their food. They are not of the mealy, but the viscous kind.

Their more elaborate cookery, or made dishes, an Englishman, at the first taste, is not likely to approve, but the culinary compositions of every country, are often such as become grateful to other nations only by degrees; though I have read a French author, who, in the elation of his heart, says, that French cookery pleases all foreigners, but foreign cookery never satisfies a Frenchman.

Their suppers are like their dinners, various, and plentiful. The table is always covered with elegant linen. Their plates for common use are often of that kind of manufacture, which is called cream-coloured, or queen's ware. They use silver on all occasions where it is common in England, nor did I ever find a spoon of horn but in one house.

The knives are not often either very bright, or very sharp. They are, indeed, instruments of which the Highlanders have not been long acquainted with the general use. They were not regularly laid on the table, before the prohibition of arms, and the change of dress. Thirty years ago the Highlander wore his knife as a companion to his dirk or dagger, and when the company sat down to meat, the men, who had knives, cut the flesh into small pieces for the women, who with their fingers conveyed it to their mouths.

There was, perhaps, never any change of national manners so quick, so great, and so general, as that which has operated in the Highlands by the last conquest, and the subsequent laws. We came thither too late to see what we expected, a people of peculiar appearance, and a system of antiquated life. The clans retain little now of their original character; their ferocity of temper is softened, their military ardour is extinguished, their dignity of independence is depressed, their contempt of government subdued, and their reverence for their chiefs abated. Of what they had before the late conquest of their country, there remain only their language and their poverty. Their

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language is attacked on every side. Schools are erected, in which English only is taught, and there were lately some who thought it reasonable to refuse them a version of the holy scriptures, that they might have no monument of their mother-tongue.

That their poverty is gradually abated, cannot be mentioned among the unpleasing consequences of subjection. They are now acquainted with money, and the possibility of gain will, by degrees, make them industrious. Such is the effect of the late regulations, that a longer journey than to the Highlands must be taken by him whose curiosity pants for savage virtues and barbarous grandeur.

At the first intermission of the stormy weather we were informed, that the boat, which was to convey us to Raasay, attended us on the coast. We had, from this time, our intelligence facilitated, and our conversation enlarged, by the company of Mr. Macqueen, minister of a parish in Sky, whose knowledge and politeness give him a title equally to kindness and respect, and who, from this time, never forsook us till we were preparing to leave Sky, and the adjacent places.

The boat was under the direction of Mr. Malcolm Macleod, a gentleman of Raasay. The water was calm, and the rowers were vigorous; so that our passage was quick and pleasant. When we came near the island, we saw the laird's house, a neat modern fabrick, and found Mr. Macleod, the proprietor of the island, with many gentlemen, expecting us on the beach. We had, as at all other places, some difficulty in landing. The crags were irregularly broken, and a false step would have been very mischievous.

It seemed that the rocks might, with no great labour, have been hewn almost into a regular flight of steps; and, as there are no other landing places, I considered this rugged ascent as the consequence of a form of life inured to hardships, and, therefore, not studious of nice accommodations. But I know not whether, for many ages, it was not considered as a part of military policy, to keep

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the country not easily accessible. The rocks are natural fortifications, and an enemy, climbing with difficulty, was easily destroyed by those who stood high above him.

Our reception exceeded our expectations. We found nothing but civility, elegance, and plenty. After the usual refreshments, and the usual conversation, the evening came upon us. The carpet was then rolled off the floor; the musician was called, and the whole company was invited to dance, nor did ever fairies trip with greater alacrity. The general air of festivity, which predominated in this place, so far remote from all those regions which the mind has been used to contemplate as the mansions of pleasure, struck the imagination with a delightful surprise, analogous to that which is felt at an unexpected emersion from darkness into light.

When it was time to sup, the dance ceased, and six and thirty persons sat down to two tables in the same room. After supper the ladies sung Erse songs, to which I listened, as an English audience to an Italian opera, delighted with the sound of words which I did not understand.

I inquired the subjects of the songs, and was told of one, that it was a love song, and of another, that it was a farewell, composed by one of the islanders that was going, in this epidemical fury of emigration, to seek his fortune in America. What sentiments would rise, on such an occasion, in the heart of one who had not been taught to lament by precedent, I should gladly have known; but the lady, by whom I sat, thought herself not equal to the work of translating.

Mr. Macleod is the proprietor of the islands of Raasay, Rona, and Fladda, and possesses an extensive district in Sky. The estate has not, during four hundred years, gained or lost a single acre.

One of the old Highland alliances has continued for two hundred years, and is still subsisting between Macleod of Raasay, and Macdonald of Sky, in consequence of which, the survivor always inherits the arms of the de-

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ceased; a natural memorial of military friendship. At the death of the late sir James Macdonald, his sword was delivered to the present laird of Raasay.

The family of Raasay consists of the laird, the lady, three sons, and ten daughters. For the sons there is a tutor in the house, and the lady is said to be very skilful and diligent in the education of the girls. More gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestick society, is not found in the most polished countries.

Raasay is the only inhabited island in Mr. Macleod's possession. Rona and Fladda afford only pasture for cattle, of which one hundred and sixty winter in Rona, under the superintendence of a solitary herdsman.

The length of Raasay is, by computation, fifteen miles, and the breadth two. These countries have never been measured, and the computation by miles is negligent and arbitrary. We observed, in travelling, that the nominal and real distance of places had very little relation to each other. Raasay, probably, contains near a hundred square miles. It affords not much ground, notwithstanding its extent, either for tillage or pasture; for it is rough, rocky, and barren. The cattle often perish by falling from the precipices. It is, like the other islands, I think, generally naked of shade, but it is naked by neglect; for the laird has an orchard, and very large forest-trees grow about his house. Like other hilly countries it has many rivulets. One of the brooks turns a corn-mill, and at least one produces trout.

In the streams or fresh lakes of the islands, I have never heard of any other fish than trouts and eels. The trouts which I have seen are not large; the colour of their flesh is tinged as in England. Of their eels I can give no account, having never tasted them; for, I believe, they are not considered as wholesome food.

It is not very easy to fix the principles upon which mankind have agreed to eat some animals, and reject others; and as the principle is not evident, it is not uni-

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form. That which is selected as delicate in one country, is, by its neighbours, abhorred as loathsome. The Neapolitans lately refused to eat potatoes in a famine. An Englishman is not easily persuaded to dine on snails with an Italian, on frogs with a Frenchman, or on horse-flesh with a Tartar. The vulgar inhabitants of Sky, I know not whether of the other islands, have not only eels, but pork and bacon in abhorrence, and, accordingly, I never saw a hog in the Hebrides, except one at Dunvegan.

Raasay has wild fowl in abundance, but neither deer, hares, nor rabbits. Why it has them not, might be asked, but that of such questions there is no end. Why does any nation want what it might have? Why are not spices transplanted to America? Why does tea continue to be brought from China? Life improves but by slow degrees, and much in every place is yet to do. Attempts have been made to raise roebucks in Raasay, but without effect: the young ones it is extremely difficult to rear, and the old can very seldom be taken alive.

Hares and rabbits might be more easily obtained. That they have few or none of either in Sky, they impute to the ravage of the foxes, and have, therefore, set, for some years past, a price upon their heads, which, as the number was diminished, has been gradually raised, from three shillings and sixpence to a guinea, a sum so great in this part of the world, that, in a short time, Sky may be as free from foxes, as England from wolves. The fund for these rewards is a tax of sixpence in the pound, imposed by the farmers on themselves, and said to be paid with great willingness.

The beasts of prey in the islands are foxes, otters, and weasels. The foxes are bigger than those of England; but the otters exceed ours in a far greater proportion. I saw one at Armidel, of a size much beyond that which I supposed them ever to attain; and Mr. Maclean, the heir of Col, a man of middle stature, informed me that he once shot an otter, of which the tail reached the ground, when he held up the head to a level with his own.

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I expected the otter to have a foot particularly formed for the art of swimming; but, upon examination, I did not find it differing much from that of a spaniel. As he preys in the sea, he does little visible mischief, and is killed only for his fur. White otters are sometimes seen.

In Raasay they might have hares and rabbits, for they have no foxes. Some depredations, such as were never made before, have caused a suspicion that a fox has been lately landed in the island by spite or wantonness. This imaginary stranger has never yet been seen, and, therefore, perhaps, the mischief was done by some other animal. It is not likely that a creature so ungentle, whose head could have been sold in Sky for a guinea, should be kept alive only to gratify the malice of sending him to prey upon a neighbour: and the passage from Sky is wider than a fox would venture to swim, unless he were chased by dogs into the sea, and, perhaps, than his strength would enable him to cross. How beasts of prey came into any islands is not easy to guess. In cold countries they take advantage of hard winters, and travel over the ice; but this is a very scanty solution; for they are found where they have no discoverable means of coming.

The corn of this island is but little. I saw the harvest of a small field. The women reaped the corn, and the men bound up the sheaves. The strokes of the sickle were timed by the modulation of the harvest-song, in which all their voices were united. They accompany in the Highlands every action, which can be done in equal time, with an appropriated strain, which has, they say, not much meaning; but its effects are regularity and cheerfulness. The ancient proceleusmatick song, by which the rowers of galleys were animated, may be supposed to have been of this kind. There is now an oar-song used by the Hebridians.

The ground of Raasay seems fitter for cattle than for corn, and of black cattle I suppose the number is very great. The laird himself keeps a herd of four hundred, one hundred of which are annually sold. Of an extensive

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domain, which he holds in his own hands, he considers the sale of cattle as repaying him the rent, and supports the plenty of a very liberal table with the remaining product.

Raasay is supposed to have been very long inhabited. On one side of it, they show caves into which the rude nations of the first ages retreated from the weather. These dreary vaults might have had other uses. There is still a cavity near the house called the oar-cave, in which the seamen, after one of those piratical expeditions which in rougher times were very frequent, used, as tradition tells, to hide their oars. This hollow was near the sea, that nothing so necessary might be far to be fetched; and it was secret, that enemies, if they landed, could find nothing. Yet it is not very evident of what use it was to hide their oars from those, who, if they were masters of the coast, could take away their boats.

A proof much stronger of the distance at which the first possessours of this island lived from the present time, is afforded by the stone heads of arrows, which are very frequently picked up. The people call them elf-bolts, and believe that the fairies shoot them at the cattle. They nearly resemble those which Mr. Banks has lately brought from the savage countries in the Pacifick Ocean, and must have been made by a nation, to which the use of metals was unknown.

The number of this little community has never been counted by its ruler, nor have I obtained any positive account, consistent with the result of political computation. Not many years ago, the late laird led out one hundred men upon a military expedition. The sixth part of a people is supposed capable of bearing arms: Raasay had, therefore, six hundred inhabitants. But, because it is not likely that every man able to serve in the field would follow the summons, or that the chief would leave his lands totally defenceless, or take away all the hands qualified for labour, let it be supposed, that half as many might be permitted to stay at home. The whole number will then

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be nine hundred, or nine to a square mile; a degree of populousness greater than those tracts of desolation can often show. They are content with their country, and faithful to their chiefs, and yet uninfected with the fever of migration.

Near the house at Raasay is a chapel unroofed and ruinous, which has long been used only as a place of burial. About the churches in the islands are small squares enclosed with stone, which belong to particular families, as repositories for the dead. At Raasay there is one, I think, for the proprietor, and one for some collateral house.

It is told by Martin, that at the death of the lady of the island, it has been here the custom to erect a cross. This we found not to be true. The stones that stand about the chapel at a small distance, some of which, perhaps, have crosses cut upon them, are believed to have been not funeral monuments, but the ancient boundaries of the sanctuary or consecrated ground.

Martin was a man not illiterate; he was an inhabitant of Sky, and, therefore, was within reach of intelligence and with no great difficulty might have visited the places which he undertakes to describe; yet, with all his opportunities, he has often suffered himself to be deceived. He lived in the last century, when the chiefs of the clans had lost little of their original influence. The mountains were yet unpenetrated, no inlet was opened to foreign novelties, and the feudal institutions operated upon life with their full force. He might, therefore, have displayed a series of subordination and a form of government, which in more luminous and improved regions, have been long forgotten, and have delighted his readers with many uncouth customs that are now disused, and wild opinions that prevail no longer. But he probably had not knowledge of the world sufficient to qualify him for judging what would deserve or gain the attention of mankind. The mode of life which was familiar to himself, he did not suppose unknown to others, nor imagined that he could

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give pleasure by telling that, of which it was, in his little country, impossible to be ignorant.

What he has neglected cannot now be performed. In nations, where there is hardly the use of letters, what is once out of sight is lost for ever. They think but little, and of their few thoughts, none are wasted on the past, in which they are neither interested by fear nor hope. Their only registers are stated observances and practical representations. For this reason, an age of ignorance is an age of ceremony. Pageants and processions, and commemorations, gradually shrink away, as better methods come into use of recording events, and preserving rights.

It is not only in Raasay that the chapel is unroofed and useless; through the few islands which we visited, we neither saw nor heard of any house of prayer, except in Sky, that was not in ruins. The malignant influence of calvinism has blasted ceremony and decency together; and if the remembrance of papal superstition is obliterated, the monuments of papal piety are likewise effaced.

It has been, for many years, popular to talk of the lazy devotion of the Romish clergy; over the sleepy laziness of men that erected churches, we may indulge our superiority with a new triumph, by comparing it with the fervid activity of those who suffer them to fall.

Of the destruction of churches, the decay of religion must in time be the consequence; for while the publick acts of the ministry are now performed in houses, a very small number can be present; and as the greater part of the islanders make no use of books, all must necessarily live in total ignorance, who want the opportunity of vocal instruction.

From these remains of ancient sanctity, which are every where to be found, it has been conjectured that, for the last two centuries, the inhabitants of the islands have decreased in number. This argument, which supposes that the churches have been suffered to fall, only because they were no longer necessary, would have some force, if the

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houses of worship still remaining were sufficient for the people. But since they have now no churches at all, these venerable fragments do not prove the people of former times to have been more numerous, but to have been more devout. If the inhabitants were doubled, with their present principles, it appears not that any provision for publick worship would be made. Where the religion of a country enforces consecrated buildings, the number of those buildings may be supposed to afford some indication, however uncertain, of the populousness of the place; but where, by a change of manners, a nation is contented to live without them, their decay implies no diminution of inhabitants.

Some of these dilapidations are said to be found in islands now uninhabited; but I doubt whether we can thence infer that they were ever peopled. The religion of the middle age is well known to have placed too much hope in lonely austerities. Voluntary solitude was the great art of propitiation, by which crimes were effaced, and conscience was appeased; it is, therefore, not unlikely, that oratories were often built in places where retirement was sure to have no disturbance.

Raasay has little that can detain a traveller, except the laird and his family; but their power wants no auxiliaries. Such a seat of hospitality, amidst the winds and waters, fills the imagination with a delightful contrariety of images. Without is the rough ocean, and the rocky land, the beating billows, and the howling storm: within is plenty and elegance, beauty and gaiety, the song and the dance. In Raasay, if I could have found an Ulysses, I had fancied a Phæacia.

At Raasay, by good fortune, Macleod, so the chief of the clan is called, was paying a visit, and by him we were invited to his seat at Dunvegan. Raasay has a stout boat, built in Norway, in which, with six oars, he conveyed us back to Sky. We landed at Port Re, so called, because James the fifth of Scotland, who had curiosity to visit the

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islands, came into it. The port is made by an inlet of the sea, deep and narrow, where a ship lay waiting to dispeople Sky, by carrying the natives away to America.

In coasting Sky, we passed by the cavern in which it was the custom, as Martin relates, to catch birds in the night, by making a fire at the entrance. This practice is disused; for the birds, as is known often to happen, have changed their haunts.

Here we dined at a publick house, I believe the only inn of the island, and having mounted our horses, travelled in the manner already described, till we came to Kingsborough, a place distinguished by that name, because the king lodged here when he landed at Port Re. We were entertained with the usual hospitality by Mr. Macdonald, and his lady Flora Macdonald, a name that will be mentioned in history, and, if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour. She is a woman of middle stature, soft features, gentle manners, and elegant presence.

In the morning we sent our horses round a promontory to meet us, and spared ourselves part of the day's fatigue, by crossing an arm of the sea. We had at last some difficulty in coming to Dunvegan; for our way led over an extensive moor, where every step was to be taken with caution, and we were often obliged to alight, because the ground could not be trusted. In travelling this watery flat, I perceived that it had a visible declivity, and might, without much expense or difficulty, be drained. But difficulty and expense are relative terms, which have different meanings in different places.

To Dunvegan we came, very willing to be at rest, and found our fatigue amply recompensed by our reception. Lady Macleod, who had lived many years in England, was newly come hither with her son and four daughters, who knew all the arts of southern elegance, and all the modes of English economy. Here, therefore, we settled, and did not spoil the present hour with thoughts of departure.

Dunvegan is a rocky prominence, that juts out into a

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bay, on the west side of Sky. The house, which is the principal seat of Macleod, is partly old and partly modern; it is built upon the rock, and looks upon the water. It forms two sides of a small square: on the third side is the skeleton of a castle of unknown antiquity, supposed to have been a Norwegian fortress, when the Danes were masters of the islands. It is so nearly entire, that it might have easily been made habitable, were there not an ominous tradition in the family, that the owner shall not long outlive the reparation. The grandfather of the present laird, in defiance of prediction, began the work, but desisted in a little time, and applied his money to worse uses.

As the inhabitants of the Hebrides lived, for many ages, in continual expectation of hostilities, the chief of every clan resided in a fortress. This house was accessible only from the water, till the last possessour opened an entrance by stairs upon the land.

They had formerly reason to be afraid, not only of declared wars, and authorized invaders, or of roving pirates, which, in the northern seas, must have been very common; but of inroads and insults from rival clans, who, in the plenitude of feudal independence, asked no leave of their sovereign to make war on one another. Sky has been ravaged by a feud between the two mighty powers of Macdonald and Macleod. Macdonald having married a Macleod, upon some discontent dismissed her, perhaps because she had brought him no children. Before the reign of James the fifth, a Highland laird made a trial of his wife for a certain time, and if she did not please him, he was then at liberty to send her away. This, however, must always have offended, and Macleod, resenting the injury, whatever were its circumstances, declared, that the wedding had been solemnized without a bonfire, but that the separation should be better illuminated; and raising a little army, set fire to the territories of Macdonald, who returned the visit, and prevailed.

Another story may show the disorderly state of insular neighbourhood. The inhabitants of the isle of Egg,

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meeting a boat manned by Macleods, tied the crew hand and foot, and set them adrift. Macleod landed upon Egg, and demanded the offenders; but the inhabitants, refusing to surrender them, retreated to a cavern, into which they thought their enemies unlikely to follow them. Macleod choked them with smoke, and left them lying dead by families as they stood.

Here the violence of the weather confined us for some time, not at all to our discontent or inconvenience. We would, indeed, very willingly have visited the islands, which might be seen from the house scattered in the sea, and I was particularly desirous to have viewed Isay; but the storms did not permit us to launch a boat, and we were condemned to listen in idleness to the wind, except when we were better engaged by listening to the ladies.

We had here more wind than waves, and suffered the severity of a tempest, without enjoying its magnificence. The sea being broken by the multitude of islands, does not roar with so much noise, nor beat the storm with such foamy violence, as I have remarked on the coast of Sussex. Though, while I was in the Hebrides, the wind was extremely turbulent, I never saw very high billows.

The country about Dunvegan is rough and barren. There are no trees, except in the orchard, which is a low sheltered spot, surrounded with a wall.

When this house was intended to sustain a siege, a well was made in the court, by boring the rock downwards, till water was found, which, though so near to the sea, I have not heard mentioned as brackish, though it has some hardness, or other qualities, which make it less fit for use; and the family is now better supplied from a stream, which runs by the rock, from two pleasing waterfalls.

Here we saw some traces of former manners, and heard some standing traditions. In the house is kept an ox's horn, hollowed so as to hold perhaps two quarts, which the heir of Macleod was expected to swallow at one draught, as a test of his manhood, before he was permitted to bear arms, or could claim a seat among the

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men. It is held, that the return of the laird to Dunvegan, after any considerable absence, produces a plentiful capture of herrings; and that, if any woman crosses the water to the opposite island, the herrings will desert the coast. Boethius tells the same of some other place. This tradition is not uniform. Some hold that no woman may pass, and others that none may pass but a Macleod.

Among other guests, which the hospitality of Dunvegan brought to the table, a visit was paid by the laird and lady of a small island south of Sky, of which the proper name is Muack, which signifies swine. It is commonly called Muck, which the proprietor not liking, has endeavoured, without effect, to change to Monk. It is usual to call gentlemen in Scotland by the name of their possessions, as Raasay, Bernera, Loch Buy, a practice necessary in countries inhabited by clans, where all that live in the same territory have one name, and must be therefore discriminated by some addition. This gentleman, whose name, I think, is, Maclean, should be regularly called Muck; but the appellation, which he thinks too coarse for his island, he would like still less for himself, and he is, therefore, addressed by the title of, Isle of Muck.

This little island, however it be named, is of considerable value. It is two English miles long, and three quarters of a mile broad, and consequently contains only nine hundred and sixty English acres. It is chiefly arable. Half of this little dominion the laird retains in his own hand, and on the other half, live one hundred and sixty persons, who pay their rent by exported corn. What rent they pay, we were not told, and could not decently inquire. The proportion of the people to the land is such, as the most fertile countries do not commonly maintain.

The laird, having all his people under his immediate view, seems to be very attentive to their happiness. The devastation of the smallpox, when it visits places where it comes seldom, is well known. He has disarmed it of its terrour at Muack, by inoculating eighty of his people. The expense was two shillings and sixpence a head.

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Many trades they cannot have among them, but upon occasion, he fetches a smith from the isle of Egg, and has a tailor from the mainland, six times a year. This island well deserved to be seen, but the laird's absence left us no opportunity.

Every inhabited island has its appendant and subordinate islets. Muck, however small, has yet others smaller about it, one of which has only ground sufficient to afford pasture for three wethers.

At Dunvegan I had tasted lotus, and was in danger of forgetting that I was ever to depart, till Mr. Boswell sagely reproached me with my sluggishness and softness. I had no very forcible defence to make; and we agreed to pursue our journey. Macleod accompanied us to Ulinish, where we were entertained by the sheriff of the island.

Mr. Macqueen travelled with us, and directed our attention to all that was worthy of observation. With him we went to see an ancient building, called a dun or borough. It was a circular enclosure, about forty-two feet in diameter, walled round with loose stones, perhaps to the height of nine feet. The walls are very thick, diminishing a little towards the top, and, though in these countries stone is not brought far, must have been raised with much labour. Within the great circle were several smaller rounds of wall, which formed distinct apartments. Its date and its use are unknown. Some suppose it the original seat of the chiefs of the Macleods. Mr. Macqueen thought it a Danish fort.

The entrance is covered with flat stones, and is narrow, because it was necessary that the stones which lie over it, should reach from one wall to the other; yet, strait as the passage is, they seem heavier than could have been placed where they now lie, by the naked strength of as many men as might stand about them. They were probably raised by putting long pieces of wood under them, to which the action of a long line of lifters might be applied. Savages, in all countries, have patience proportionate to

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their unskilfulness, and are content to attain their end by very tedious methods.

If it was ever roofed, it might once have been a dwelling, but as there is no provision for water, it could not have been a fortress. In Sky, as in every other place, there is an ambition of exalting whatever has survived memory, to some important use, and referring it to very remote ages. I am inclined to suspect, that in lawless times, when the inhabitants of every mountain stole the cattle of their neighbour, these enclosures were used to secure the herds and flocks in the night. When they were driven within the wall, they might be easily watched, and defended as long as could be needful; for the robbers durst not wait till the injured clan should find them in the morning.

The interiour enclosures, if the whole building were once a house, were the chambers of the chief inhabitants. If it was a place of security for cattle, they were probably the shelters of the keepers.

From the Dun we were conducted to another place of security, a cave carried a great way under ground, which had been discovered by digging after a fox. These caves, of which many have been found, and many, probably, remain concealed, are formed, I believe, commonly by taking advantage of a hollow, where banks or rocks rise on either side. If no such place can be found, the ground must be cut away. The walls are made by piling stones against the earth, on either side. It is then roofed by large stones laid across the cavern, which therefore cannot be wide. Over the roof, turfs were placed, and grass was suffered to grow; and the mouth was concealed by bushes, or some other cover.

These caves were represented to us as the cabins of the first rude inhabitants, of which, however, I am by no means persuaded. This was so low, that no man could stand upright in it. By their construction they are all so narrow, that two can never pass along them together,

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and being subterraneous, they must be always damp. They are not the work of an age much ruder than the present; for they are formed with as much art as the construction of a common hut requires. I imagine them to have been places only of occasional use, in which the islander, upon a sudden alarm, hid his utensils or his clothes, and perhaps sometimes his wife and children.

This cave we entered, but could not proceed the whole length, and went away without knowing how far it was carried. For this omission we shall be blamed, as we perhaps have blamed other travellers; but the day was rainy, and the ground was damp. We had with us neither spades nor pickaxes, and if love of ease surmounted our desire of knowledge, the offence has not the invidiousness of singularity.

Edifices, either standing or ruined, are the chief records of an illiterate nation. In some part of this journey, at no great distance from our way, stood a shattered fortress, of which the learned minister, to whose communication we are much indebted, gave us an account.

"Those," said he, "are the walls of a place of refuge, built in the time of James the sixth, by Hugh Macdonald, who was next heir to the dignity and fortune of his chief. Hugh, being so near his wish, was impatient of delay; and had art and influence sufficient to engage several gentlemen in a plot against the laird's life. Something must be stipulated on both sides; for they would not dip their hands in blood merely for Hugh's advancement. The compact was formally written, signed by the conspirators, and placed in the hands of one Macleod.

"It happened that Macleod had sold some cattle to a drover, who, not having ready money, gave him a bond for payment. The debt was discharged, and the bond redemanded; which Macleod, who could not read, intending to put into his hands, gave him the conspiracy. The drover, when he had read the paper, delivered it privately to Macdonald, who, being thus informed of his danger, called his friends together, and provided for his safety. He

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made a publick feast, and inviting Hugh Macdonald and his confederates, placed each of them at the table, between two men of known fidelity. The compact of conspiracy was then shown, and every man confronted with his own name. Macdonald acted with great moderation. He upbraided Hugh both with disloyalty and ingratitude; but told the rest, that he considered them as men deluded and misinformed. Hugh was sworn to fidelity, and dismissed with his companions; but he was not generous enough to be reclaimed by lenity; and finding no longer any countenance among the gentlemen, endeavoured to execute the same design by meaner hands. In this practice he was detected, taken to Macdonald's castle, and imprisoned in the dungeon. When he was hungry, they let down a plentiful meal of salted meat; and when, after his repast, he called for drink, conveyed to him a covered cup, which, when he lifted the lid, he found empty. From that time they visited him no more, but left him to perish in solitude and darkness."

We were then told of a cavern by the seaside, remarkable for the powerful reverberation of sounds. After dinner we took a boat, to explore this curious cavity. The boatmen, who seemed to be of a rank above that of common drudges, inquired who the strangers were, and being told we came one from Scotland, and the other from England, asked if the Englishman could recount a long genealogy. What answer was given them, the conversation being in Erse, I was not much inclined to examine.

They expected no good event of the voyage; for one of them declared that he heard the cry of an English ghost. This omen I was not told till after our return, and, therefore, cannot claim the dignity of despising it.

The sea was smooth. We never left the shore, and came without any disaster to the cavern, which we found rugged and misshapen, about one hundred and eighty feet long, thirty wide in the broadest part, and in the loftiest, as we guessed, about thirty high. It was now dry, but at high water the sea rises in it near six feet.

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Here I saw what I had never seen before, limpets and muscles in their natural state. But as a new testimony to the veracity of common fame, here was no echo to be heard.

We then walked through a natural arch in the rock, which might have pleased us by its novelty, had the stones, which encumbered our feet, given us leisure to consider it. We were shown the gummy seed of the kelp, that fastens itself to a stone, from which it grows into a strong stalk.

In our return, we found a little boy upon the point of a rock, catching with his angle a supper for the family. We rowed up to him, and borrowed his rod, with which Mr. Boswell caught a cuddy.

The cuddy is a fish of which I know not the philosophical name. It is not much bigger than a gudgeon, but it is of great use in these islands, as it affords the lower people both food, and oil for their lamps. Cuddies are so abundant, at some times of the year, that they are caught like white bait in the Thames, only by dipping a basket and drawing it back.

If it were always practicable to fish, these islands could never be in much danger from famine; but unhappily, in the winter, when other provision fails, the seas are commonly too rough for nets, or boats.

From Ulinish our next stage was to Talisker, the house of colonel Macleod, an officer in the Dutch service, who in this time of universal peace, has for several years been permitted to be absent from his regiment. Having been bred to physick, he is consequently a scholar, and his lady, by accompanying him in his different places of residence, is become skilful in several languages. Talisker is the place, beyond all that I have seen, from which the gay and the jovial seem utterly excluded; and where the hermit might expect to grow old in meditation, without possibility of disturbance or interruption. It is situated very near the sea, but upon a coast where no vessel lands, but when it is driven by a tempest on the rocks. To-

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wards the land are lofty hills streaming with waterfals. The garden is sheltered by firs, or pines, which grow there so prosperously, that some which the present inhabitant planted, are very high and thick.

At this place we very happily met with Mr. Donald Maclean, a young gentleman, the eldest son of the laird of Col, heir to a very great extent of land, and so desirous of improving his inheritance, that he spent a considerable time among the farmers of Hertfordshire and Hampshire, to learn their practice. He worked with his own hands at the principal operations of agriculture, that he might not deceive himself by a false opinion of skill, which, if he should find it deficient at home, he had no means of completing. If the world has agreed to praise the travels and manual labours of the czar of Muscovy, let Col have his share of the like applause, in the proportion of his dominions to the empire of Russia.

This young gentleman was sporting in the mountains of Sky, and when he was weary with following his game, repaired for lodging to Talisker. At night he missed one of his dogs, and, when he went to seek him in the morning, found two eagles feeding on his carcass.

Col, for he must be named by his possessions, hearing that our intention was to visit Iona, offered to conduct us to his chief, sir Allan Maclean, who lived in the isle of Inch Kenneth, and would readily find us a convenient passage. From this time was formed an acquaintance, which, being begun by kindness, was accidentally continued by constraint; we derived much pleasure from it, and I hope have given him no reason to repent it.

The weather was now almost one continued storm, and we were to snatch some happy intermission to be conveyed to Mull, the third island of the Hebrides, lying about a degree south of Sky, whence we might easily find our way to Inch Kenneth, where sir Allan Maclean resided, and afterward to Iona.

For this purpose, the most commodious station that we could take was Armidel, which sir Alexander Macdonald

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had now left to a gentleman, who lived there as his factor or steward.

In our way to Armidel was Coriatachan, where we had already been, and to which, therefore, we were very willing to return. We staid, however, so long at Talisker, that a great part of our journey was performed in the gloom of the evening. In travelling even thus almost without light through naked solitude, when there is a guide whose conduct may be trusted, a mind not naturally too much disposed to fear, may preserve some degree of cheerfulness; but what must be the solicitude of him who should be wandering, among the crags and hollows, benighted, ignorant, and alone?

The fictions of the Gothick romances were not so remote from credibility as they are now thought. In the full prevalence of the feudal institution, when violence desolated the world, and every baron lived in a fortress, forests and castles were regularly succeeded by each other, and the adventurer might very suddenly pass from the gloom of woods, or the ruggedness of moors, to seats of plenty, gaiety, and magnificence. Whatever is imagined in the wildest tale, if giants, dragons, and enchantment be excepted, would be felt by him, who, wandering in the mountains without a guide, or upon the sea without a pilot, should be carried amidst his terrour and uncertainty, to the hospitality and elegance of Raasay or Dunvegan.

To Coriatachan at last we came, and found ourselves welcomed as before. Here we staid two days, and made such inquiries as curiosity suggested. The house was filled with company, among whom Mr. Macpherson and his sister distinguished themselves by their politeness and accomplishments. By him we were invited to Ostig, a house not far from Armidel, where we might easily hear of a boat, when the weather would suffer us to leave the island.

At Ostig, of which Mr. Macpherson is minister, we were entertained for some days, then removed to Armi-

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del, where we finished our observations on the island of Sky.

As this island lies in the fifty-seventh degree, the air cannot be supposed to have much warmth. The long continuance of the sun above the horizon, does, indeed, sometimes produce great heat in northern latitudes; but this can only happen in sheltered places, where the atmosphere is to a certain degree stagnant, and the same mass of air continues to receive for many hours the rays of the sun, and the vapours of the earth. Sky lies open on the west and north to a vast extent of ocean, and is cooled, in the summer, by a perpetual ventilation, but by the same blast is kept warm in winter. Their weather is not pleasing. Half the year is deluged with rain. From the autumnal to the vernal equinox, a dry day is hardly known, except when the showers are suspended by a tempest. Under such skies can be expected no great exuberance of vegetation. Their winter overtakes their summer, and their harvest lies upon the ground drenched with rain. The autumn struggles hard to produce some of our early fruits. I gathered gooseberries in September; but they were small, and the husk was thick.

The winter is seldom such as puts a full stop to the growth of plants, or reduces the cattle to live wholly on the surplusage of the summer. In the year seventy-one they had a severe season, remembered by the name of the Black Spring, from which the island has not yet recovered. The snow lay long upon the ground, a calamity hardly known before. Part of their cattle died for want, part were unseasonably sold to buy sustenance for the owners; and, what I have not read or heard of before, the kine that survived were so emaciated and dispirited, that they did not require the male at the usual time. Many of the roebucks perished.

The soil, as in other countries, has its diversities. In some parts there is only a thin layer of earth spread upon a rock, which bears nothing, but short brown heath, and perhaps is not generally capable of any better product.

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There are many bogs or mosses of greater or less extent, where the soil cannot be supposed to want depth, though it is too wet for the plough. But we did not observe in these any aquatick plants. The valleys and the mountains are alike darkened with heath. Some grass, however, grows here and there, and some happier spots of earth are capable of tillage.

Their agriculture is laborious, and, perhaps, rather feeble than unskilful. Their chief manure is sea-weed, which, when they lay it to rot upon the field, gives them a better crop than those of the Highlands. They heap sea shells upon the dunghill, which in time moulder into a fertilizing substance. When they find a vein of earth where they cannot use it, they dig it up, and add it to the mould of a more commodious place.

Their corn grounds often lie in such intricacies among the crags, that there is no room for the action of a team and plough. The soil is then turned up by manual labour, with an instrument called a crooked spade, of a form and weight which, to me, appeared very incommodious, and would, perhaps, be soon improved in a country where workmen could be easily found, and easily paid. It has a narrow blade of iron fixed to a long and heavy piece of wood, which must have, about a foot and a half above the iron, a knee or flexure with the angle downwards. When the farmer encounters a stone, which is the great impediment of his operations, he drives the blade under it, and bringing the knee or angle to the ground, has in the long handle a very forcible lever.

According to the different mode of tillage, farms are distinguished into *long land* and *short land*. Long land is that which affords room for a plough, and short land is turned up by the spade.

The grain which they commit to the furrows thus tediously formed, is either oats or barley. They do not sow barley without very copious manure, and then they expect from it ten for one, an increase equal to that of better countries; but the culture is so operose, that they con-

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tent themselves commonly with oats; and who can relate without compassion, that after all their diligence they are to expect only a triple increase? It is in vain to hope for plenty, when a third part of the harvest must be reserved for seed.

When their grain is arrived at the state which they must consider as ripeness, they do not cut, but pull the barley: to the oats they apply the sickle. Wheel carriages they have none, but make a frame of timber, which is drawn by one horse, with the two points behind pressing on the ground. On this they sometimes drag home their sheaves, but often convey them home in a kind of open pannier, or frame of sticks, upon the horse's back.

Of that which is obtained with so much difficulty, nothing surely ought to be wasted; yet their method of clearing their oats from the husk, is by parching them in the straw. Thus, with the genuine improvidence of savages, they destroy that fodder, for want of which their cattle may perish. From this practice they have two petty conveniencies; they dry the grain so that it is easily reduced to meal, and they escape the theft of the thresher. The taste contracted from the fire by the oats, as by every other scorched substance, use must long ago have made grateful. The oats that are not parched, must be dried in a kiln.

The barns of Sky I never saw. That which Macleod, of Raasay, had erected near his house was so contrived, because the harvest is seldom brought home dry, as, by perpetual perflation, to prevent the mow from heating.

Of their gardens I can judge only from their tables. I did not observe that the common greens were wanting, and suppose, that by choosing an advantageous exposition, they can raise all the more hardy esculent plants. Of vegetable fragrance, or beauty, they are not yet studious. Few vows are made to Flora in the Hebrides.

They gather a little hay, but the grass is mown late; and is so often almost dry and again very wet, before it is housed, that it becomes a collection of withered stalks

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without taste or fragrance; it must be eaten by cattle that have nothing else, but by most English farmers would be thrown away.

In the islands I have not heard that any subterraneous treasures have been discovered, though where there are mountains, there are commonly minerals. One of the rocks in Col has a black vein, imagined to consist of the ore of lead; but it was never yet opened or essayed. In Sky a black mass was accidentally picked up, and brought into the house of the owner of the land, who found himself strongly inclined to think it a coal, but unhappily, it did not burn in the chimney. Common ores would be here of no great value; for what requires to be separated by fire, must, if it were found, be carried away in its mineral state, here being no fewel for the smelting house or forge. Perhaps by diligent search in this world of stone, some valuable pieces of marble might be discovered. But neither philosophical curiosity, nor commercial industry, have yet fixed their abode here, where the importunity of immediate want, supplied but for the day, and craving on the morrow, has left little room for excursive knowledge, or the pleasing fancies of distant profit.

They have lately found a manufacture considerably lucrative. Their rocks abound with kelp, a sea plant, of which the ashes are melted into glass. They burn kelp in great quantities, and then send it away in ships, which come regularly to purchase them. This new source of riches has raised the rents of many maritime farms; but the tenants pay, like all other tenants, the additional rent with great unwillingness; because they consider the profits of the kelp as the mere product of personal labour, to which the landlord contributes nothing. However, as any man may be said to give what he gives the power of gaining, he has certainly as much right to profit from the price of kelp, as of any thing else found or raised upon his ground.

This new trade has excited a long and eager litigation between Macdonald and Macleod, for a ledge of rocks,

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which, till the value of kelp was known, neither of them desired the reputation of possessing.

The cattle of Sky are not so small as is commonly believed. Since they have sent their beeves in great numbers to southern marts, they have, probably, taken more care of their breed. At stated times the annual growth of cattle is driven to a fair, by a general drover, and with the money, which he returns to the farmer, the rents are paid.

The price regularly expected, is from two to three pounds a head; there was once one sold for five pounds. They go from the islands very lean, and are not offered to the butcher till they have been long fatted in English pastures.

Of their black cattle some are without horns, called by the Scots, *humble* cows, as we call a bee, an *humble* bee, that wants a sting. Whether this difference be specifick, or accidental, though we inquired with great diligence, we could not be informed. We are not very sure that the bull is ever without horns, though we have been told, that such bulls there are. What is produced by putting a horned and unhorned male and female together, no man has ever tried, that thought the result worthy of observation.

Their horses are, like their cows, of a moderate size. I had no difficulty to mount myself commodiously by the favour of the gentlemen. I heard of very little cows in Barra, and very little horses in Rum, where, perhaps, no care is taken to prevent that diminution of size, which must always happen, where the greater and the less copulate promiscuously, and the young animal is restrained from growth by penury of sustenance.

The goat is the general inhabitant of the earth, complying with every difference of climate and of soil. The goats of the Hebrides are like others: nor did I hear any thing of their sheep to be particularly remarked.

In the penury of these malignant regions, nothing is left

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that can be converted to food. The goats and the sheep are milked like the cows. A single meal of a goat is a quart, and of a sheep a pint. Such, at least, was the account, which I could extract from those of whom I am not sure that they ever had inquired.

The milk of goats is much thinner than that of cows, and that of sheep is much thicker. Sheep's milk is never eaten before it is boiled; as it is thick, it must be very liberal of curd, and the people of St. Kilda form it into small cheeses.

The stags of the mountains are less than those of our parks or forests, perhaps not bigger than our fallow deer. Their flesh has no rankness, nor is inferiour in flavour to our common venison. The roebuck I neither saw nor tasted. These are not countries for a regular chase. The deer are not driven with horns and hounds. A sportsman, with his gun in his hand, watches the animal, and when he has wounded him, traces him by the blood.

They have a race of brinded greyhounds, larger and stronger than those with which we course hares, and those are the only dogs used by them for the chase.

Man is, by the use of firearms, made so much an overmatch for other animals, that in all countries, where they are in use, the wild part of the creation sensibly diminishes. There will, probably, not be long either stags or roebucks in the islands. All the beasts of chase would have been lost long ago in countries well inhabited, had they not been preserved by laws for the pleasure of the rich.

There are in Sky neither rats nor mice, but the weasel is so frequent, that he is heard in houses rattling behind chests or beds, as rats in England. They, probably, owe to his predominance, that they have no other vermin; for since the great rat took possession of this part of the world, scarce a ship can touch at any port, but some of his race are left behind. They have within these few years begun to infest the isle of Col, where, being left by some

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trading vessel, they have increased for want of vessels to oppose them.

The inhabitants of Sky, and of the other islands, which I have seen, are commonly of the middle stature, with fewer among them very tall or very short, than are seen in England; or perhaps, as their numbers are small, the chances of any deviation from the common measure are necessarily few. The tallest men that I saw are among those of higher rank. In regions of barrenness and scarcity, the human race is hindered in its growth by the same causes as other animals.

The ladies have as much beauty here as in other places, but bloom and softness are not to be expected among the lower classes, whose faces are exposed to the rudeness of the climate, and whose features are sometimes contracted by want, and sometimes hardened by the blasts. Supreme beauty is seldom found in cottages or workshops, even where no real hardships are suffered. To expand the human face to its full perfection, it seems necessary that the mind should cooperate by placidness of content, or consciousness of superiority.

Their strength is proportionate to their size, but they are accustomed to run upon rough ground, and, therefore, can with great agility skip over the bog, or clamber the mountain. For a campaign in the wastes of America, soldiers better qualified could not have been found. Having little work to do, they are not willing, nor perhaps able, to endure a long continuance of manual labour, and are, therefore, considered as habitually idle.

Having never been supplied with those accommodations, which life extensively diversified with trades affords, they supply their wants by very insufficient shifts, and endure many inconveniencies, which a little attention would easily relieve. I have seen a horse carrying home the harvest on a crate. Under his tail was a stick for a crupper, held at the two ends by twists of straw. Hemp will grow in their islands, and, therefore, ropes may be had.

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If they wanted hemp, they might make better cordage of rushes, or perhaps of nettles, than of straw.

Their method of life neither secures them perpetual health, nor exposes them to any particular diseases. There are physicians in the islands, who, I believe, all practise chirurgery, and all compound their own medicines.

It is generally supposed, that life is longer in places where there are few opportunities of luxury; but I found no instance here of extraordinary longevity. A cottager grows old over his oaten cakes, like a citizen at a turtle feast. He is, indeed, seldom incommoded by corpulence. Poverty preserves him from sinking under the burden of himself, but he escapes no other injury of time. Instances of long life are often related, which those who hear them are more willing to credit than examine. To be told that any man has attained a hundred years, gives hope and comfort to him who stands trembling on the brink of his own climacterick.

Length of life is distributed impartially, to very different modes of life in very different climates; and the mountains have no greater examples of age and health than the low lands, where I was introduced to two ladies of high quality; one of whom, in her ninety-fourth year, presided at her table with the full exercise of all her powers; and the other has attained her eighty-fourth, without any diminution of her vivacity, and with little reason to accuse time of depredations on her beauty.

In the islands, as in most other places, the inhabitants are of different rank, and one does not encroach here upon another. Where there is no commerce nor manufacture, he that is born poor can scarcely become rich; and if none are able to buy estates, he that is born to land, cannot annihilate his family by selling it. This was once the state of these countries. Perhaps there is no example, till within a century and a half, of any family whose estate was alienated, otherwise than by violence or forfeiture. Since money has been brought amongst them, they have

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found, like others, the art of spending more than they receive; and I saw with grief the chief of a very ancient clan, whose island was condemned by law to be sold for the satisfaction of his creditors.

The name of highest dignity is laird, of which there are in the extensive isle of Sky only three, Macdonald, Maccleod, and Mackinnon. The laird is the original owner of the land, whose natural power must be very great, where no man lives but by agriculture; and where the produce of the land is not conveyed through the labyrinths of traffick, but passes directly, from the hand that gathers it, to the mouth that eats it. The laird has all those in his power that live upon his farms. Kings can, for the most part, only exalt or degrade. The laird, at pleasure, can feed or starve, can give bread, or withhold it. This inherent power was yet strengthened by the kindness of consanguinity, and the reverence of patriarchal authority. The laird was the father of the clan, and his tenants commonly bore his name. And to these principles of original command was added, for many ages, an exclusive right of legal jurisdiction.

This multifarious and extensive obligation operated with force scarcely credible. Every duty, moral or political, was absorbed in affection and adherence to the chief. Not many years have passed since the clans knew no law but the laird's will. He told them to whom they should be friends or enemies, what king they should obey, and what religion they should profess.

When the Scots first rose in arms against the succession of the house of Hanover, Lovat, the chief of the Frasers, was in exile for a rape. The Frasers were very numerous, and very zealous against the government. A pardon was sent to Lovat. He came to the English camp, and the clan immediately deserted to him.

Next in dignity to the laird is the tacksman; a large taker or leaseholder of land, of which he keeps part as a domain in his own hand, and lets part to under-tenants. The tacksman is necessarily a man capable of securing to

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the laird the whole rent, and is commonly a collateral relation. These *tacks*, or subordinate possessions, were long considered as hereditary, and the occupant was distinguished by the name of the place at which he resided. He held a middle station, by which the highest and the lowest orders were connected. He paid rent and reverence to the laird, and received them from the tenants. This tenure still subsists, with its original operation, but not with the primitive stability. Since the islanders, no longer content to live, have learned the desire of growing rich, an ancient dependant is in danger of giving way to a higher bidder, at the expense of domestick dignity, and hereditary power. The stranger, whose money buys him preference, considers himself as paying for all that he has, and is indifferent about the laird's honour or safety. The commodiousness of money is indeed great; but there are some advantages which money cannot buy, and which, therefore, no wise man will, by the love of money, be tempted to forego.

I have found in the hither parts of Scotland, men, not defective in judgment or general experience, who consider the tacksman as a useless burden of the ground, as a drone who lives upon the product of an estate, without the right of property, or the merit of labour, and who impoverishes at once the landlord and the tenant. The land, say they, is let to the tacksman at sixpence an acre, and by him to the tenant at tenpence. Let the owner be the immediate landlord to all the tenants; if he sets the ground at eightpence, he will increase his revenue by a fourth part, and the tenants' burden will be diminished by a fifth.

Those who pursue this train of reasoning, seem not sufficiently to inquire whither it will lead them, nor to know that it will equally show the propriety of suppressing all wholesale trade, of shutting up the shops of every man who sells what he does not make, and of extruding all whose agency and profit intervene between the manufacturer and the consumer. They may, by stretching their

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understandings a little wider, comprehend, that all those who, by undertaking large quantities of manufacture, and affording employment to many labourers, make themselves considered as benefactors to the publick, have only been robbing their workmen with one hand, and their customers with the other. If Crowley had sold only what he could make, and all his smiths had wrought their own iron with their own hammers, he would have lived on less, and they would have sold their work for more. The salaries of superintendents and clerks would have been partly saved, and partly shared, and nails been sometimes cheaper by a farthing in a hundred. But then if the smith could not have found an immediate purchaser, he must have deserted his anvil; if there had, by accident, at any time, been more sellers than buyers, the workmen must have reduced their profit to nothing, by underselling one another; and, as no great stock could have been in any hand, no sudden demand of large quantities could have been answered, and the builder must have stood still till the nailer could supply him.

According to these schemes, universal plenty is to begin and end in universal misery. Hope and emulation will be utterly extinguished; and as all must obey the call of immediate necessity, nothing that requires extensive views, or provides for distant consequences, will ever be performed.

To the southern inhabitants of Scotland, the state of the mountains, and the islands, is equally unknown with that of Borneo or Sumatra; of both they have only heard a little, and guess the rest. They are strangers to the language and the manners, to the advantages and the wants of the people, whose life they would model, and whose evils they would remedy.

Nothing is less difficult, than to procure one convenience by the forfeiture of another. A soldier may expedite his march by throwing away his arms. To banish the tacksman is easy, to make a country plentiful by diminishing the people, is an expeditious mode of husbandry;

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but that abundance, which there is nobody to enjoy, contributes little to human happiness.

As the mind must govern the hands, so, in every society, the man of intelligence must direct the man of labour. If the tacksman be taken away, the Hebrides must, in their present state, be given up to grossness and ignorance; the tenant, for want of instruction, will be unskilful, and for the want of admonition, will be negligent. The laird, in these wide estates, which often consist of islands remote from one another, cannot extend his personal influence to all his tenants; and the steward having no dignity annexed to his character, can have little authority among men taught to pay reverence only to birth, and who regard the tacksman as their hereditary superiour; nor can the steward have equal zeal for the prosperity of an estate profitable only to the laird, with the tacksman, who has the laird's income involved in his own.

The only gentlemen in the islands are the lairds, the tacksmen, and the ministers, who frequently improve their livings by becoming farmers. If the tacksmen be banished, who will be left to impart knowledge, or impress civility? The laird must always be at a distance from the greater part of his lands; and if he resides at all upon them, must drag his days in solitude, having no longer either a friend or a companion; he will, therefore, depart to some more comfortable residence, and leave the tenants to the wisdom and mercy of a factor.

Of tenants there are different orders, as they have greater or less stock. Land is sometimes leased to a small fellowship, who live in a cluster of huts, called a Tenant's Town, and are bound jointly and separately for the payment of their rent. These, I believe, employ in the care of their cattle and the labour of tillage, a kind of tenants yet lower; who, having a hut, with grass for a certain number of cows and sheep, pay their rent by a stipulated quantity of labour.

The condition of domestick servants, or the price of

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occasional labour, I do not know with certainty. I was told that the maids have sheep, and are allowed to spin for their own clothing; perhaps they have no pecuniary wages, or none but in very wealthy families. The state of life, which has hitherto been purely pastoral, begins now to be a little variegated with commerce; but novelties enter by degrees, and till one mode has fully prevailed over the other, no settled notion can be formed.

Such is the system of insular subordination, which, having little variety, cannot afford much delight in the view, nor long detain the mind in contemplation. The inhabitants were for a long time perhaps not unhappy; but their content was a muddy mixture of pride and ignorance, an indifference for pleasures which they did not know, a blind veneration for their chiefs, and a strong conviction of their own importance.

Their pride has been crushed by the heavy hand of a vindictive conqueror, whose severities have been followed by laws, which, though they cannot be called cruel, have produced much discontent, because they operate upon the surface of life, and make every eye bear witness to subjection. To be compelled to a new dress has always been found painful.

Their chiefs, being now deprived of their jurisdiction, have already lost much of their influence; and as they gradually degenerate from patriarchal rulers to rapacious landlords, they will divest themselves of the little that remains.

That dignity which they derived from an opinion of their military importance, the law, which disarmed them, has abated. An old gentleman, delighting himself with the recollection of better days, related, that forty years ago, a chieftain walked out attended by ten or twelve followers, with their arms rattling. That animating rabble has now ceased. The chief has lost his formidable retinue; and the Highlander walks his heath unarmed and defenceless, with the peaceful submission of a French peasant, or English cottager.

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Their ignorance grows every day less, but their knowledge is yet of little other use than to show them their wants. They are now in the period of education, and feel the uneasiness of discipline, without yet perceiving the benefit of instruction.

The last law, by which the Highlanders are deprived of their arms, has operated with efficacy beyond expectation. Of former statutes made with the same design, the execution had been feeble, and the effect inconsiderable. Concealment was undoubtedly practised, and perhaps often with connivance. There was tenderness or partiality on one side, and obstinacy on the other. But the law, which followed the victory of Culloden, found the whole nation dejected and intimidated; informations were given without danger and without fear, and the arms were collected with such rigour, that every house was despoiled of its defence.

To disarm part of the Highlands, could give no reasonable occasion of complaint. Every government must be allowed the power of taking away the weapon that is lifted against it. But the loyal clans murmured, with some appearance of justice, that, after having defended the king, they were forbidden for the future to defend themselves; and that the sword should be forfeited, which had been legally employed. Their case is undoubtedly hard, but in political regulations good cannot be complete, it can only be predominant.

Whether by disarming a people thus broken into several tribes, and thus remote from the seat of power, more good than evil has been produced, may deserve inquiry. The supreme power, in every community, has the right of debarring every individual, and every subordinate society, from self-defence, only because the supreme power is able to defend them; and, therefore, where the governour cannot act, he must trust the subject to act for himself. These islands might be wasted with fire and sword before their sovereign would know their distress. A gang of robbers, such as has been lately found confederating

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themselves in the Highlands, might lay a wide region under contribution. The crew of a petty privateer might land on the largest and most wealthy of the islands, and riot without control in cruelty and waste. It was observed by one of the chiefs of Sky, that fifty armed men might, without resistance, ravage the country. Laws that place the subjects in such a state, contravene the first principles of the compact of authority: they exact obedience, and yield no protection.

It affords a generous and manly pleasure, to conceive a little nation gathering its fruits and tending its herds with fearless confidence, though it lies open on every side to invasion, where, in contempt of walls and trenches, every man sleeps securely with his sword beside him; where all, on the first approach of hostility, came together at the call to battle, as at a summons to a festal show; and, committing their cattle to the care of those whom age or nature has disabled, engaged the enemy with that competition for hazard and for glory, which operate in men that fight under the eye of those whose dislike or kindness they have always considered as the greatest evil or the greatest good.

This was, in the beginning of the present century, the state of the Highlands. Every man was a soldier, who partook of national confidence, and interested himself in national honour. To lose this spirit, is to lose what no small advantage will compensate.

It may, likewise, deserve to be inquired, whether a great nation ought to be totally commercial? whether, amidst the uncertainty of human affairs, too much attention to one mode of happiness, may not endanger others? whether the pride of riches must not sometimes have recourse to the protection of courage? and whether, if it be necessary to preserve in some part of the empire the military spirit, it can subsist more commodiously in any place, than in remote and unprofitable provinces, where it can commonly do little harm, and whence it may be called forth at any sudden exigence?

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It must, however, be confessed, that a man who places honour only in successful violence, is a very troublesome and pernicious animal in time of peace; and that the martial character cannot prevail in a whole people, but by the diminution of all other virtues. He that is accustomed to resolve all right into conquest, will have very little tenderness or equity. All the friendship in such a life can be only a confederacy of invasion, or alliance of defence. The strong must flourish by force, and the weak subsist by stratagem.

Till the Highlanders lost their ferocity with their arms, they suffered from each other all that malignity could dictate, or precipitance could act. Every provocation was revenged with blood, and no man that ventured into a numerous company, by whatever occasion brought together, was sure of returning without a wound. If they are now exposed to foreign hostilities, they may talk of the danger, but can seldom feel it. If they are no longer martial, they are no longer quarrelsome. Misery is caused, for the most part, not by a heavy crush of disaster, but by the corrosion of less visible evils, which canker enjoyment, and undermine security. The visit of an invader is necessarily rare, but domestick animosities allow no cessation.

The abolition of the local jurisdictions, which had for so many ages been exercised by the chiefs, has likewise its evil and its good. The feudal constitution naturally diffused itself into long ramifications of subordinate authority. To this general temper of the government was added the peculiar form of the country, broken by mountains into many subdivisions, scarcely accessible but to the natives, and guarded by passes, or perplexed with intricacies, through which national justice could not find its way.

The power of deciding controversies, and of punishing offences, as some such power there must always be, was entrusted to the lairds of the country, to those whom the people considered as their natural judges. It cannot be

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supposed that a rugged proprietor of the rocks, unprincipled and unenlightened, was a nice resolver of entangled claims, or very exact in proportioning punishment to offences. But the more he indulged his own will, the more he held his vassals in dependance. Prudence and innocence, without the favour of the chief, conferred no security; and crimes involved no danger, when the judge was resolute to acquit.

When the chiefs were men of knowledge and virtue, the convenience of a domestick judicature was great. No long journeys were necessary, nor artificial delays could be practised; the character, the alliances, and interests of the litigants were known to the court, and all false pretences were easily detected. The sentence, when it was past, could not be evaded; the power of the laird superseded formalities, and justice could not be defeated by interest or stratagem.

I doubt not but that since the regular judges have made their circuits through the whole country, right has been every where more wisely and more equally distributed; the complaint is, that litigation is grown troublesome, and that the magistrates are too few, and therefore often too remote for general convenience.

Many of the smaller islands have no legal officer within them. I once asked, if a crime should be committed, by what authority the offender could be seized? and was told, that the laird would exert his right; a right which he must now usurp, but which surely necessity must vindicate, and which is, therefore, yet exercised in lower degrees, by some of the proprietors, when legal processes cannot be obtained.

In all greater questions, however, there is now happily an end to all fear or hope from malice or from favour. The roads are secure in those places through which, forty years ago, no traveller could pass without a convoy. All trials of right by the sword are forgotten, and the mean are in as little danger from the powerful as in other places. No scheme of policy has, in any country, yet

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brought the rich and poor on equal terms into courts of judicature. Perhaps experience, improving on experience, may in time effect it.

Those who have long enjoyed dignity and power, ought not to lose it without some equivalent. There was paid to the chiefs by the publick, in exchange for their privileges, perhaps a sum greater than most of them had ever possessed, which excited a thirst for riches, of which it showed them the use. When the power of birth and station ceases, no hope remains but from the prevalence of money. Power and wealth supply the place of each other. Power confers the ability of gratifying our desire without the consent of others. Wealth enables us to obtain the consent of others to our gratification. Power, simply considered, whatever it confers on one, must take from another. Wealth enables its owner to give to others, by taking only from himself. Power pleases the violent and proud: wealth delights the placid and the timorous. Youth, therefore, flies at power, and age grovels after riches.

The chiefs, divested of their prerogatives, necessarily turned their thoughts to the improvement of their revenues, and expect more rent, as they have less homage. The tenant, who is far from perceiving that his condition is made better in the same proportion as that of his landlord is made worse, does not immediately see why his industry is to be taxed more heavily than before. He refuses to pay the demand, and is ejected; the ground is then let to a stranger, who, perhaps, brings a larger stock, but who, taking the land at its full price, treats with the laird upon equal terms, and considers him not as a chief but as a trafficker in land. Thus the estate, perhaps, is improved, but the clan is broken.

It seems to be the general opinion, that the rents have been raised with too much eagerness. Some regard must be paid to prejudice. Those who have hitherto paid but little, will not suddenly be persuaded to pay much, though they can afford it. As ground is gradually im-

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proved, and the value of money decreases, the rent may be raised without any diminution of the farmer's profits; yet it is necessary in these countries, where the ejection of a tenant is a greater evil than in more populous places, to consider, not merely what the land will produce, but with what ability the inhabitant can cultivate it. A certain stock can allow but a certain payment; for if the land be doubled, and the stock remains the same, the tenant becomes no richer. The proprietors of the Highlands might, perhaps, often increase their income, by subdividing the farms, and allotting to every occupier only so many acres as he can profitably employ, but that they want people.

There seems now, whatever be the cause, to be through a great part of the Highlands a general discontent. That adherence which was lately professed by every man to the chief of his name, has now little prevalence; and he that cannot live as he desires at home, listens to the tale of fortunate islands, and happy regions, where every man may have land of his own, and eat the product of his labour without a superiour.

Those who have obtained grants of American lands, have, as is well known, invited settlers from all quarters of the globe; and among other places, where oppression might produce a wish for new habitations, their emissaries would not fail to try their persuasions in the isles of Scotland, where, at the time when the clans were newly disunited from their chiefs, and exasperated by unprecedented exactions, it is no wonder that they prevailed.

Whether the mischiefs of emigration were immediately perceived, may be justly questioned. They who went first, were probably such as could best be spared; but the accounts sent by the earliest adventurers, whether true or false, inclined many to follow them; and whole neighbourhoods formed parties for removal; so that departure from their native country is no longer exile. He that goes thus accompanied, carries with him all that makes life pleasant. He sits down in a better climate, sur-

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rounded by his kindred and his friends: they carry with them their language, their opinions, their popular songs, and hereditary merriment; they change nothing but the place of their abode; and of that change they perceive the benefit.

This is the real effect of emigration, if those that go away together, settle on the same spot, and preserve their ancient union. But some relate that these adventurous visitants of unknown regions, after a voyage passed in dreams of plenty and felicity, are dispersed at last upon a sylvan wilderness, where their first years must be spent in toil to clear the ground which is afterwards to be tilled; and that the whole effect of their undertaking is only more fatigue and equal scarcity.

Both accounts may be suspected. Those who are gone will endeavour, by every art, to draw others after them; for as their numbers are greater, they will provide better for themselves. When Nova Scotia was first peopled, I remember a letter, published under the character of a New Planter, who related how much the climate put him in mind of Italy. Such intelligence the Hebridians probably receive from their transmarine correspondents. But with equal temptations of interest, and, perhaps, with no greater niceness of veracity, the owners of the islands spread stories of American hardships, to keep their people content at home.

Some method to stop this epidemick desire of wandering, which spreads its contagion from valley to valley, deserves to be sought with great diligence. In more fruitful countries, the removal of one, only makes room for the succession of another: but in the Hebrides, the loss of an inhabitant leaves a lasting vacuity; for nobody born in any other parts of the world will choose this country for his residence; and an island once depopulated, will remain a desert, as long as the present facility of travel gives every one, who is discontented and unsettled, the choice of his abode.

Let it be inquired, whether the first intention of those

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who are fluttering on the wing, and collecting a flock that they may take their flight, be to attain good, or to avoid evil? If they are dissatisfied with that part of the globe which their birth has allotted them, and resolve not to live without the pleasures of happier climates; if they long for bright suns, and calm skies, and flowery fields, and fragrant gardens, I know not by what eloquence they can be persuaded, or by what offers they can be hired to stay.

But if they are driven from their native country by positive evils, and disgusted by ill-treatment, real or imaginary, it were fit to remove their grievances, and quiet their resentment; since, if they have been hitherto undutiful subjects, they will not much mend their principles by American conversation.

To allure them into the army, it was thought proper to indulge them in the continuance of their national dress. If this concession could have any effect, it might easily be made. That dissimilitude of appearance, which was supposed to keep them distinct from the rest of the nation, might disincline them from coalescing with the Pennsylvanians or people of Connecticut. If the restitution of their arms will reconcile them to their country, let them have again those weapons, which will not be more mischievous at home than in the colonies. That they may not fly from the increase of rent, I know not whether the general good does not require that the landlords be, for a time, restrained in their demands, and kept quiet by pensions proportionate to their loss.

To hinder insurrection by driving away the people, and to govern peaceably, by having no subjects, is an expedient that argues no great profundity of politicks. To soften the obdurate, to convince the mistaken, to mollify the resentful, are worthy of a statesman; but it affords a legislator little self-applause to consider, that where there was formerly an insurrection, there is now a wilderness.

It has been a question often agitated, without solution, why those northern regions are now so thinly peopled,

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which formerly overwhelmed, with their armies, the Roman empire? The question supposes, what I believe is not true, that they had once more inhabitants than they could maintain, and overflowed only because they were full.

This is to estimate the manners of all countries and ages by our own. Migration, while the state of life was unsettled, and there was little communication of intelligence between distant places, was, among the wilder nations of Europe, capricious and casual. An adventurous projector heard of a fertile coast unoccupied, and led out a colony; a chief of renown for bravery, called the young men together, and led them out to try what fortune would present. When Cæsar was in Gaul, he found the Helvetians preparing to go they knew not whither, and put a stop to their motions. They settled again in their own country, where they were so far from wanting room, that they had accumulated three years' provision for their march.

The religion of the north was military; if they could not find enemies, it was their duty to make them: they travelled in quest of danger, and willingly took the chance of empire or death. If their troops were numerous, the countries from which they were collected are of vast extent, and, without much exuberance of people, great armies may be raised where every man is a soldier. But their true numbers were never known. Those who were conquered by them, are their historians, and shame may have excited them to say, that they were overwhelmed with multitudes. To count is a modern practice, the ancient method was to guess; and when numbers are guessed, they are always magnified.

Thus England has, for several years, been filled with the achievements of seventy thousand Highlanders employed in America. I have heard from an English officer, not much inclined to favour them, that their behaviour deserved a very high degree of military praise; but their number has been much exaggerated. One of the ministers told me, that seventy thousand men could not have been

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found in all the Highlands, and that more than twelve thousand never took the field. Those that went to the American war, went to destruction. Of the old Highland regiment, consisting of twelve hundred, only seventy-six survived to see their country again.

The Gothick swarms have at least been multiplied with equal liberality. That they bore no great proportion to the inhabitants in whose countries they settled, is plain from the paucity of northern words now found in the provincial languages. Their country was not deserted for want of room, because it was covered with forests of vast extent; and the first effect of plenitude of inhabitants is the destruction of wood. As the Europeans spread over America, the lands are gradually laid naked.

I would not be understood to say, that necessity had never any part in their expeditions. A nation, whose agriculture is scanty or unskilful, may be driven out by famine. A nation of hunters may have exhausted their game. I only affirm, that the northern regions were not, when their irruptions subdued the Romans, overpeopled with regard to their real extent of territory, and power of fertility. In a country fully inhabited, however afterward laid waste, evident marks will remain of its former populousness. But of Scandinavia and Germany, nothing is known but that, as we trace their state upwards into antiquity, their woods were greater, and their cultivated ground was less.

That causes very different from want of room, may produce a general disposition to seek another country, is apparent from the present conduct of the Highlanders, who are, in some places, ready to threaten a total secession. The numbers which have already gone, though like other numbers they may be magnified, are very great, and such as, if they had gone together and agreed upon any certain settlement, might have founded an independent government in the depths of the western continent. Nor are they only the lowest and most indigent; many men of considerable wealth have taken with them their train of

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labourers and dependants; and if they continue the feudal scheme of polity, may establish new clans in the other hemisphere.

That the immediate motives of their desertion must be imputed to their landlords, may be reasonably concluded, because some lairds, of more prudence and less rapacity, have kept their vassals undiminished. From Raasay only one man had been seduced, and at Col there was no wish to go away.

The traveller who comes hither from more opulent countries, to speculate upon the remains of pastoral life, will not much wonder that a common Highlander has no strong adherence to his native soil; for of animal enjoyments, or of physical good, he leaves nothing that he may not find again wheresoever he may be thrown.

The habitations of men in the Hebrides may be distinguished into huts and houses. By a house, I mean a building with one story over another; by a hut, a dwelling with only one floor. The laird, who formerly lived in a castle, now lives in a house; sometimes sufficiently neat, but seldom very spacious or splendid. The tacksmen and the ministers have commonly houses. Wherever there is a house, the stranger finds a welcome; and to the other evils of exterminating tacksmen may be added the unavoidable cessation of hospitality, or the devolution of too heavy a burden on the ministers.

Of the houses little can be said. They are small, and by the necessity of accumulating stores, where there are so few opportunities of purchase, the rooms are very heterogeneously filled. With want of cleanliness it were ingratitude to reproach them. The servants, having been bred upon the naked earth, think every floor clean, and the quick succession of guests, perhaps not always over-elegant, does not allow much time for adjusting their apartments.

Huts are of many gradations; from murky dens to commodious dwellings.

The wall of a common hut is always built without mortar, by a skilful adaptation of loose stones. Sometimes

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perhaps a double wall of stones is raised, and the intermediate space filled with earth. The air is thus completely excluded. Some walls are, I think, formed of turfs, held together by a wattle, or texture of twigs. Of the meanest huts the first room is lighted by the entrance, and the second by the smoke-hole. The fire is usually made in the middle. But there are huts or dwellings of only one story, inhabited by gentlemen, which have walls cemented with mortar, glass windows, and boarded floors. Of these all have chimneys, and some chimneys have grates.

The house and the furniture are not always nicely suited. We were driven once, by missing a passage, to the hut of a gentleman, where, after a very liberal supper, when I was conducted to my chamber, I found an elegant bed of Indian cotton, spread with fine sheets. The accommodation was flattering; I undressed myself, and felt my feet in the mire. The bed stood upon the bare earth, which a long course of rain had softened to a puddle.

In pastoral countries, the condition of the lowest rank of people is sufficiently wretched. Among manufacturers, men that have no property may have art and industry, which make them necessary, and, therefore, valuable. But where flocks and corn are the only wealth, there are always more hands than work, and of that work there is little in which skill and dexterity can be much distinguished. He, therefore, who is born poor never can be rich. The son merely occupies the place of the father, and life knows nothing of progression or advancement.

The petty tenants, and labouring peasants, live in miserable cabins, which afford them little more than shelter from the storms. The boor of Norway is said to make all his own utensils. In the Hebrides, whatever might be their ingenuity, the want of wood leaves them no materials. They are probably content with such accommodations as stones of different forms and sizes can afford them.

Their food is not better than their lodging. They seldom taste the flesh of land-animals; for here are no markets. What each man eats is from his own stock.

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The great effect of money is to break property into small parts. In towns, he that has a shilling may have a piece of meat; but where there is no commerce, no man can eat mutton but by killing a sheep.

Fish in fair weather they need not want; but, I believe, man never lives long on fish, but by constraint; he will rather feed upon roots and berries.

The only fewel of the islands is peat. Their wood is all consumed, and coal they have not yet found. Peat is dug out of the marshes, from the depth of one foot to that of six. That is accounted the best which is nearest the surface. It appears to be a mass of black earth held together by vegetable fibres. I know not whether the earth be bituminous, or whether the fibres be not the only combustible part; which, by heating the interposed earth red-hot, make a burning mass. The heat is not very strong or lasting. The ashes are yellowish, and in a large quantity When they dig peat, they cut it into square pieces, and pile it up to dry beside the house. In some places it has an offensive smell. It is like wood charked for the smith. The common method of making peat fires is by heaping it on the hearth; but it burns well in grates, and in the best houses is so used. The common opinion is, that peat grows again where it has been cut; which, as it seems to be chiefly a vegetable substance, is not unlikely to be true, whether known or not to those who relate it.

There are watermills in Sky and Raasay; but where they are too far distant, the housewives grind their oats with a quern, or handmill, which consists of two stones, about a foot and a half in diameter; the lower is a little convex, to which the concavity of the upper must be fitted. In the middle of the upper stone is a round hole, and on one side is a long handle. The grinder sheds the corn gradually into the hole with one hand, and works the handle round with the other. The corn slides down the convexity of the lower stone, and by the motion of the upper is ground in its passage. These stones are found in Lochabar.

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The islands afford few pleasures, except to the hardy sportsman, who can tread the moor and climb the mountain. The distance of one family from another, in a country where travelling has so much difficulty, makes frequent intercourse impracticable. Visits last several days, and are commonly paid by water; yet I never saw a boat furnished with benches, or made commodious by any addition to the first fabrick. Conveniencies are not missed where they never were enjoyed.

The solace which the bagpipe can give, they have long enjoyed; but among other changes, which the last revolution introduced, the use of the bagpipe begins to be forgotten. Some of the chief families still entertain a piper, whose office was anciently hereditary. Macrimmon was piper to Macleod, and Rankin to Maclean of Col.

The tunes of the bagpipe are traditional. There has been in Sky, beyond all time of memory, a college of pipers, under the direction of Macrimmon, which is not quite extinct. There was another in Mull, superintended by Rankin, which expired about sixteen years ago. To these colleges, while the pipe retained its honour, the students of musick repaired for education. I have had my dinner exhilarated by the bagpipe, at Armidale, at Dunvegan, and in Col.

The general conversation of the islanders has nothing particular. I did not meet with the inquisitiveness of which I have read, and suspect the judgment to have been rashly made. A stranger of curiosity comes into a place where a stranger is seldom seen: he importunes the people with questions, of which they cannot guess the motive, and gazes with surprise on things which they, having had them always before their eyes, do not suspect of any thing wonderful. He appears to them like some being of another world, and then thinks it peculiar that they take their turn to inquire whence he comes, and whither he is going.

The islands were long unfurnished with instruction for youth, and none but the sons of gentlemen could have any

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literature. There are now parochial schools, to which the lord of every manor pays a certain stipend. Here the children are taught to read; but by the rule of their institution, they teach only English, so that the natives read a language which they may never use or understand. If a parish, which often happens, contains several islands, the school being but in one, cannot assist the rest. This is the state of Col, which, however, is more enlightened than some other places; for the deficiency is supplied by a young gentleman, who, for his own improvement, travels every year on foot over the Highlands to the session at Aberdeen; and at his return, during the vacation, teaches to read and write in his native island.

In Sky there are two grammar-schools, where boarders are taken to be regularly educated. The price of board is from three pounds, to four pounds ten shillings a year, and that of instruction is half a crown a quarter. But the scholars are birds of passage, who live at school only in the summer; for in winter, provisions cannot be made for any considerable number in one place. This periodical dispersion impresses strongly the scarcity of these countries.

Having heard of no boarding school for ladies nearer than Inverness, I suppose their education is generally domestick. The elder daughters of the higher families are sent into the world, and may contribute, by their acquisitions, to the improvement of the rest.

Women must here study to be either pleasing or useful. Their deficiencies are seldom supplied by very liberal fortunes. A hundred pounds is a portion beyond the hope of any but the laird's daughter. They do not indeed often give money with their daughters: the question is, How many cows a young lady will bring her husband. A rich maiden has from ten to forty; but two cows are a decent fortune for one who pretends to no distinction.

The religion of the islands is that of the kirk of Scotland. The gentlemen with whom I conversed are all inclined to the English liturgy; but they are obliged to maintain the established minister, and the country is too

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poor to afford payment to another, who must live wholly on the contribution of his audience.

They, therefore, all attend the worship of the kirk, as often as a visit from their minister, or the practicability of travelling, gives them opportunity; nor have they any reason to complain of insufficient pastors; for I saw not one in the islands, whom I had reason to think either deficient in learning, or irregular in life; but found several with whom I could not converse without wishing, as my respect increased, that they had not been presbyterians.

The ancient rigour of puritanism is now very much relaxed, though all are not yet equally enlightened. I sometimes met with prejudices sufficiently malignant, but they were prejudices of ignorance. The ministers in the islands had attained such knowledge as may justly be admired in men, who have no motive to study, but generous curiosity, or what is still better, desire of usefulness; with such politeness as so narrow a circle of converse could not have supplied, but to minds naturally disposed to elegance.

Reason and truth will prevail at last. The most learned of the Scottish doctors would now gladly admit a form of prayer, if the people would endure it. The zeal or rage of congregations has its different degrees. In some parishes the Lord's prayer is suffered; in others it is still rejected as a form; and he that should make it part of his supplication would be suspected of heretical pravity.

The principle upon which extemporary prayer was originally introduced, is no longer admitted. The minister formerly, in the effusion of his prayer, expected immediate and, perhaps, perceptible inspiration, and, therefore, thought it his duty not to think before what he should say. It is now universally confessed, that men pray as they speak on other occasions, according to the general measure of their abilities and attainments.

Whatever each may think of a form prescribed by another, he cannot but believe that he can himself com-

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pose by study and meditation a better prayer than will rise in his mind at a sudden call; and if he has any hope of supernatural help, why may he not as well receive it when he writes as when he speaks?

In the variety of mental powers, some must perform extemporary prayer with much imperfection; and in the eagerness and rashness of contradictory opinions, if publick liturgy be left to the private judgment of every minister, the congregation may often be offended or misled.

There is in Scotland, as among ourselves, a restless suspicion of popish machinations, and a clamour of numerous converts to the Romish religion. The report is, I believe, in both parts of the island equally false. The Romish religion is professed only in Egg and Canna, two small islands, into which the reformation never made its way. If any missionaries are busy in the Highlands, their zeal entitles them to respect, even from those who cannot think favourably of their doctrine.

The political tenets of the islanders I was not curious to investigate, and they were not eager to obtrude. Their conversation is decent and inoffensive. They disdain to drink for their principles, and there is no disaffection at their tables. I never heard a health offered by a Highlander that might not have circulated with propriety within the precincts of the king's palace.

Legal government has yet something of novelty to which they cannot perfectly conform. The ancient spirit that appealed only to the sword, is yet among them. The tenant of Scalpa, an island belonging to Macdonald, took no care to bring his rent; when the landlord talked of exacting payment, he declared his resolution to keep his ground, and drive all intruders from the island, and continued to feed his cattle, as on his own land, till it became necessary for the sheriff to dislodge him by violence.

The various kinds of superstition which prevailed here, as in all other regions of ignorance, are, by the diligence of the ministers, almost extirpated.

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Of *Browny*, mentioned by Martin, nothing has been heard for many years. Browny was a sturdy fairy; who, if he was fed, and kindly treated, would, as they said, do a great deal of work. They now pay him no wages, and are content to labour for themselves.

In Troda, within these three-and-thirty years, milk was put every Saturday for *Greogach*, or *the old man with the long beard*. Whether Greogach was courted as kind, or dreaded as terrible, whether they meant, by giving him the milk, to obtain good or avert evil, I was not informed. The minister is now living by whom the practice was abolished.

They have still among them a great number of charms for the cure of different diseases; they are all invocations, perhaps transmitted to them from the times of popery, which increasing knowledge will bring into disuse.

They have opinions, which cannot be ranked with superstition, because they regard only natural effects. They expect better crops of grain by sowing their seed in the moon's increase. The moon has great influence in vulgar philosophy. In my memory it was a precept annually given in one of the English almanacks, "to kill hogs when the moon was increasing, and the bacon would prove the better in boiling."

We should have had little claim to the praise of curiosity, if we had not endeavoured with particular attention to examine the question of the *second sight*. Of an opinion received for centuries by a whole nation, and supposed to be confirmed, through its whole descent, by a series of successive facts, it is desirable that the truth should be established, or the fallacy detected.

The *second sight* is an impression made either by the mind upon the eye, or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant or future are perceived, and seen as if they were present. A man on a journey far from home falls from a horse; another, who is, perhaps, at work about the house, sees him bleeding on the ground, com-

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monly with a landscape of the place where the accident befalls him. Another seer, driving home his cattle, or wandering in idleness, or musing in the sunshine, is suddenly surprised by the appearance of a bridal ceremony, or funeral procession, and counts the mourners or attendants, of whom, if he knows them, he relates the names, if he knows them not, he can describe the dresses. Things distant are seen at the instant when they happen. Of things future I know not that there is any rule for determining the time between the sight and the event.

This receptive faculty, for power it cannot be called, is neither voluntary nor constant. The appearances have no dependance upon choice: they cannot be summoned, detained, or recalled. The impression is sudden, and the effect often painful.

By the term *second sight*, seems to be meant a mode of seeing, superadded to that which nature generally bestows. In the Erse it is called *Taisch;* which signifies likewise a spectre, or a vision. I know not, nor is it likely that the Highlanders ever examined, whether by *Taisch*, used for *second sight*, they mean the power of seeing, or the thing seen.

I do not find it to be true, as it is reported, that to the second sight nothing is presented but phantoms of evil. Good seems to have the same proportion in those visionary scenes, as it obtains in real life: almost all remarkable events have evil for their basis; and are either miseries incurred, or miseries escaped. Our sense is so much stronger of what we suffer, than of what we enjoy, that the ideas of pain predominate in almost every mind. What is recollection but a revival of vexations, or history but a record of wars, treasons, and calamities? Death, which is considered as the greatest evil, happens to all. The greatest good, be it what it will, is the lot but of a part.

That they should often see death is to be expected; because death is an event frequent and important. But they see likewise more pleasing incidents. A gentleman told me, that when he had once gone far from his own

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island, one of his labouring servants predicted his return, and described the livery of his attendant, which he had never worn at home; and which had been, without any previous design, occasionally given him.

Our desire of information was keen, and our inquiry frequent. Mr. Boswell's frankness and gaiety made every body communicative; and we heard many tales of these airy shows, with more or less evidence and distinctness.

It is the common talk of the Lowland Scots, that the notion of the second sight, is wearing away with other superstitions; and that its reality is no longer supposed, but by the grossest people. How far its prevalence ever extended, or what ground it has lost, I know not. The islanders of all degrees, whether of rank or understanding, universally admit it, except the ministers, who universally deny it, and are suspected to deny it, in consequence of a system, against conviction. One of them honestly told me, that he came to Sky with a resolution not to believe it.

Strong reasons for incredulity will readily occur. This faculty of seeing things out of sight is local, and commonly useless. It is a breach of the common order of things, without any visible reason or perceptible benefit. It is ascribed only to a people very little enlightened; and among them, for the most part, to the mean and ignorant.

To the confidence of these objections it may be replied, that by presuming to determine what is fit, and what is beneficial, they presuppose more knowledge of the universal system than man has attained; and, therefore, depend upon principles too complicated and extensive for our comprehension; and that there can be no security in the consequence, when the premises are not understood; that the second sight is only wonderful because it is rare, for, considered in itself, it involves no more difficulty than dreams, or perhaps, than the regular exercise of the cogitative faculty; that a general opinion of communica-

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tive impulses, or visionary representations, has prevailed in all ages and all nations; that particular instances have been given, with such evidence as neither Bacon nor Boyle has been able to resist; that sudden impressions, which the event has verified, have been felt by more than own or publish them; that the second sight of the Hebrides implies only the local frequency of a power which is no where totally unknown; and that where we are unable to decide by antecedent reason, we must be content to yield to the force of testimony.

By pretensions to second sight, no profit was ever sought or gained. It is an involuntary affection, in which neither hope nor fear are known to have any part Those who profess to feel it do not boast of it as a privilege, nor are considered by others as advantageously distinguished. They have no temptation to feign; and their hearers have no motive to encourage the imposture.

To talk with any of these seers is not easy. There is one living in Sky, with whom we would have gladly conversed; but he was very gross and ignorant, and knew no English. The proportion in these countries of the poor to the rich is such, that if we suppose the quality to be accidental, it can very rarely happen to a man of education; and yet on such men it has sometimes fallen. There is now a second-sighted gentlemen in the Highlands, who complains of the terrours to which he is exposed.

The foresight of the seers is not always prescience: they are impressed with images, of which the event only shows them the meaning. They tell what they have seen to others, who are, at that time, not more knowing than themselves, but may become at last very adequate witnesses, by comparing the narrative with its verification.

To collect sufficient testimonies for the satisfaction of the publick, or of ourselves, would have required more time than we could bestow. There is against it, the seeming analogy of things confusedly seen, and little understood; and for it, the indistinct cry of national per-

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suasion, which may be, perhaps, resolved at last into prejudice and tradition. I never could advance my curiosity to conviction; but came away at last only willing to believe.

As there subsists no longer in the islands much of that peculiar and discriminative form of life, of which the idea had delighted our imagination, we were willing to listen to such accounts of past times as would be given us. But we soon found what memorials were to be expected from an illiterate people, whose whole time is a series of distress; where every morning is labouring with expedients for the evening; and where all mental pains or pleasure arose from the dread of winter, the expectation of spring, the caprices of their chiefs, and the motions of the neighbouring clans; where there was neither shame from ignorance, nor pride in knowledge; neither curiosity to inquire, nor vanity to communicate.

The chiefs, indeed, were exempt from urgent penury and daily difficulties; and in their houses were preserved what accounts remained of past ages. But the chiefs were sometimes ignorant and careless, and sometimes kept busy by turbulence and contention; and one generation of ignorance effaces the whole series of unwritten history. Books are faithful repositories, which may be awhile neglected or forgotten; but when they are opened again, will again impart their instruction: memory, once interrupted, is not to be recalled. Written learning is a fixed luminary, which, after the cloud that had hidden it has passed away, is again bright in its proper station. Tradition is but a meteor, which, if once it falls, cannot be rekindled.

It seems to be universally supposed, that much of the local history was preserved by the bards, of whom one is said to have been retained by every great family. After these bards were some of my first inquiries; and I received such answers as, for awhile, made me please myself with my increase of knowledge; for I had not then learned how to estimate the narration of a Highlander.

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They said that a great family had a *bard* and a *senachi*, who were the poet and historian of the house; and an old gentleman told me that he remembered one of each. Here was a dawn of intelligence. Of men that had lived within memory, some certain knowledge might be attained. Though the office had ceased, its effects might continue; the poems might be found, though there was no poet.

Another conversation, indeed, informed me, that the same man was both bard and senachi. This variation discouraged me; but as the practice might be different in different times, or at the same time in different families, there was yet no reason for supposing that I must necessarily sit down in total ignorance.

Soon after I was told by a gentleman, who is generally acknowledged the greatest master of Hebridian antiquities, that there had, indeed, once been both bards and senachies; and that *senachi* signified *the man of talk*, or of conversation; but that neither bard nor senachi had existed for some centuries. I have no reason to suppose it exactly known at what time the custom ceased, nor did it probably cease in all houses at once. But whenever the practice of recitation was disused, the works, whether poetical or historical, perished with the authors; for in those times nothing had been written in the Erse language.

Whether *the man of talk* was an historian, whose office was to tell truth, or a story-teller, like those which were in the last century, and, perhaps, are now among the Irish, whose trade was only to amuse, it now would be vain to inquire.

Most of the domestick offices were, I believe, hereditary; and probably the laureate of a clan was always the son of the last laureate. The history of the race could no otherwise be communicated or retained; but what genius could be expected in a poet by inheritance?

The nation was wholly illiterate. Neither bards nor senachies could write or read; but if they were ignorant,

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there was no danger of detection; they were believed by those whose vanity they flattered.

The recital of genealogies, which has been considered as very efficacious to the preservation of a true series of ancestry, was anciently made when the heir of the family came to manly age. This practice has never subsisted within time of memory, nor was much credit due to such rehearsers, who might obtrude fictitious pedigrees, either to please their master, or to hide the deficiency of their own memories.

Where the chiefs of the Highlands have found the histories of their descent, is difficult to tell; for no Erse genealogy was ever written. In general this only is evident, that the principal house of a clan must be very ancient, and that those must have lived long in a place, of whom it is not known when they came thither.

Thus hopeless are all attempts to find any traces of Highland learning. Nor are their primitive customs and ancient manner of life otherwise than very faintly and uncertainly remembered by the present race.

The peculiarities which strike the native of a commercial country, proceeded, in a great measure, from the want of money. To the servants and dependants that were not domesticks, and, if an estimate be made from the capacity of any of their old houses which I have seen, their domesticks could have been but few, were appropriated certain portions of land for their support. Macdonald has a piece of ground yet called the bards' or senachies' field. When a beef was killed for the house, particular parts were claimed as fees by the several officers, or workmen. What was the right of each I have not learned. The head belonged to the smith, and the udder of a cow to the piper; the weaver had likewise his particular part; and so many pieces followed these prescriptive claims, that the laird's was at last but little.

The payment of rent in kind has been so long disused in England, that it is totally forgotten. It was practised very lately in the Hebrides, and probably still continues,

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not only in St. Kilda, where money is not yet known, but in others of the smaller and remoter islands. It were, perhaps, to be desired, that no change in this particular should have been made. When the laird could only eat the produce of his lands, he was under the necessity of residing upon them; and when the tenant could not convert his stock into more profitable riches, he could never be tempted away from his farm, from the only place where he could be wealthy. Money confounds subordination, by overpowering the distinctions of rank and birth, and weakens authority, by supplying power of resistance, or expedients for escape. The feudal system is formed for a nation employed in agriculture, and has never long kept its hold where gold and silver have become common.

Their arms were anciently the *glaymore*, or great two-handed sword, and afterwards the two-edged sword and target, or buckler, which was sustained on the left arm. In the midst of the target, which was made of wood, covered with leather, and studded with nails, a slender lance, about two feet long, was sometimes fixed; it was heavy and cumbrous, and accordingly has for some time past been gradually laid aside. Very few targets were at Culloden. The dirk, or broad dagger, I am afraid, was of more use in private quarrels than in battles. The Lochaber axe is only a slight alteration of the old English bill.

After all that has been said of the force and terrour of the Highland sword, I could not find that the art of defence was any part of common education. The gentlemen were, perhaps, sometimes skilful gladiators, but the common men had no other powers than those of violence and courage. Yet it is well known, that the onset of the Highlanders was very formidable. As an army cannot consist of philosophers, a panick is easily excited by any unwonted mode of annoyance. New dangers are naturally magnified; and men accustomed only to exchange bullets at a distance, and rather to hear their enemies than see them, are discouraged and amazed when they

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find themselves encountered hand to hand, and catch the gleam of steel flashing in their faces.

The Highland weapons gave opportunity for many exertions of personal courage, and sometimes for single combats in the field; like those which occur so frequently in fabulous wars. At Falkirk, a gentleman now living, was, I suppose after the retreat of the king's troops, engaged at a distance from the rest with an Irish dragoon. They were both skilful swordsmen, and the contest was not easily decided: the dragoon at last had the advantage, and the Highlander called for quarter; but quarter was refused him, and the fight continued till he was reduced to defend himself upon his knee: at that instant one of the Macleods came to his rescue; who, as it is said, offered quarter to the dragoon, but he thought himself obliged to reject what he had before refused, and, as battle gives little time to deliberate, was immediately killed.

Funerals were formerly solemnized by calling multitudes together, and entertaining them at a great expense. This emulation of useless cost has been for some time discouraged, and at last, in the isle of Sky, is almost suppressed.

Of the Erse language, as I understand nothing, I cannot say more than I have been told. It is the rude speech of a barbarous people, who had few thoughts to express, and were content, as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood. After what has been lately talked of Highland bards, and Highland genius, many will startle when they are told, that the Erse never was a written language; that there is not in the world an Erse manuscript a hundred years old; and that the sounds of the Highlanders were never expressed by letters, till some little books of piety were translated, and a metrical version of the Psalms was made by the synod of Argyle. Whoever, therefore, now writes in this language, spells according to his own perception of the sound, and his own idea of the power of the letters. The Welsh and the Irish are cultivated

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tongues. The Welsh, two hundred years ago, insulted their English neighbours for the instability of their orthography; while the Erse merely floated in the breath of the people, and could, therefore, receive little improvement.

When a language begins to teem with books, it is tending to refinement; as those who undertake to teach others must have undergone some labour in improving themselves, they set a proportionate value on their own thoughts, and wish to enforce them by efficacious expressions; speech becomes embodied and permanent; different modes and phrases are compared, and the best obtains an establishment. By degrees, one age improves upon another. Exactness is first obtained, and afterwards elegance. But diction, merely vocal, is always in its childhood. As no man leaves his eloquence behind him, the new generations have all to learn. There may possibly be books without a polished language, but there can be no polished language without books.

That the bards could not read more than the rest of their countrymen, it is reasonable to suppose; because, if they had read, they could probably have written; and how high their compositions may reasonably be rated, an inquirer may best judge by considering what stores of imagery, what principles of ratiocination, what comprehension of knowledge, and what delicacy of elocution he has known any man attain who cannot read. The state of the bards was yet more hopeless. He that cannot read, may now converse with those that can; but the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, who, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more.

There has lately been in the islands one of these illiterate poets, who, hearing the Bible read at church, is said to have turned the sacred history into verse. I heard part of a dialogue, composed by him, translated by a young lady in Mull, and thought it had more meaning than I expected from a man totally uneducated; but he had some opportunities of knowledge; he lived among a

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learned people. After all that has been done for the instruction of the Highlanders, the antipathy between their language and literature still continues; and no man that has learned only Erse is, at this time, able to read.

The Erse has many dialects, and the words used in some islands are not always known in others. In literate nations, though the pronunciation, and sometimes the words of common speech, may differ, as now in England, compared with the south of Scotland, yet there is a written diction, which pervades all dialects, and is understood in every province. But where the whole language is colloquial, he that has only one part, never gets the rest, as he cannot get it but by change of residence.

In an unwritten speech, nothing that is not very short is transmitted from one generation to another. Few have opportunities of hearing a long composition often enough to learn it, or have inclination to repeat it so often as is necessary to retain it; and what is once forgotten is lost for ever. I believe there cannot be recovered in the whole Erse language five hundred lines, of which there is any evidence, to prove them a hundred years old. Yet I hear that the father of Ossian boasts of two chests more of ancient poetry, which he suppresses, because they are too good for the English.

He that goes into the Highlands with a mind naturally acquiescent, and a credulity eager for wonders, may come back with an opinion very different from mine; for the inhabitants, knowing the ignorance of all strangers in their language and antiquities, perhaps are not very scrupulous adherents to truth; yet I do not say that they deliberately speak studied falsehood, or have a settled purpose to deceive. They have inquired and considered little, and do not always feel their own ignorance. They are not much accustomed to be interrogated by others; and seem never to have thought upon interrogating themselves; so that if they do not know what they tell to be true, they likewise do not distinctly perceive it to be false.

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Mr. Boswell was very diligent in his inquiries; and the result of his investigations was, that the answer to the second question was commonly such as nullified the answer to the first.

We were awhile told, that they had an old translation of the scriptures; and told it till it would appear obstinacy to inquire again. Yet, by continued accumulation of questions, we found, that the translation meant, if any meaning there were, was nothing else than the Irish Bible.

We heard of manuscripts that were, or that had been in the hands of somebody's father, or grandfather; but at last we had no reason to believe they were other than Irish. Martin mentions Irish, but never any Erse manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time.

I suppose my opinion of the poems of Ossian is already discovered. I believe they never existed in any other form than that which we have seen. The editor, or author, never could show the original; nor can it be shown by any other. To revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence, with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt. It would be easy to show it if he had it; but whence could it be had? It is too long to be remembered, and the language formerly had nothing written. He has doubtless inserted names that circulate in popular stories, and may have translated some wandering ballads, if any can be found; and the names, and some of the images, being recollected, make an inaccurate auditor imagine, by the help of Caledonian bigotry, that he has formerly heard the whole.

I asked a very learned minister in Sky, who had used all arts to make me believe the genuineness of the book, whether at last he believed it himself? but he would not answer. He wished me to be deceived, for the honour of his country; but would not directly and formally deceive me. Yet has this man's testimony been publickly produced, as of one that held Fingal to be the work of Ossian.

It is said, that some men of integrity profess to have

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heard parts of it, but they all heard them when they were boys; and it was never said that any of them could recite six lines. They remember names, and, perhaps, some proverbial sentiments; and, having no distinct ideas, coin a resemblance without an original. The persuasion of the Scots, however, is far from universal; and in a question so capable of proof, why should doubt be suffered to continue? The editor has been heard to say, that part of the poem was 'received' by him, in the Saxon character. He has then found, by some peculiar fortune, an unwritten language, written in a character which the natives probably never beheld.

I have yet supposed no imposture but in the publisher; yet I am far from certainty, that some translations have not been lately made, that may now be obtruded as parts of the original work. Credulity on one part is a strong temptation to deceit on the other, especially to deceit of which no personal injury is the consequence, and which flatters the author with his own ingenuity. The Scots have something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction: they are seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotchman must be a very sturdy moralist, who does not love Scotland better than truth: he will always love it better than inquiry: and if falsehood flatters his vanity, will not be very diligent to detect it. Neither ought the English to be much influenced by Scotch authority; for of the past and present state of the whole Erse nation, the Lowlanders are at least as ignorant as ourselves. To be ignorant is painful; but it is dangerous to quiet our uneasiness by the delusive opiate of hasty persuasion.

But this is the age in which those who could not read, have been supposed to write; in which the giants of antiquated romance have been exhibited as realities. If we know little of the ancient Highlanders, let us not fill the vacuity with Ossian. If we have not searched the Magellanick regions, let us, however, forbear to people them with Patagons.

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Having waited some days at Armidel, we were flattered at last with a wind that promised to convey us to Mull. We went on board a boat that was taking in kelp, and left the isle of Sky behind us. We were doomed to experience, like others, the danger of trusting to the wind, which blew against us, in a short time, with such violence, that we, being no seasoned sailors, were willing to call it a tempest. I was sea-sick, and lay down. Mr. Boswell kept the deck. The master knew not well whither to go; and our difficulties might, perhaps, have filled a very pathetick page, had not Mr. Maclean of Col, who, with every other qualification which insular life requires, is a very active and skilful mariner, piloted us safe into his own harbour.

In the morning we found ourselves under the isle of Col, where we landed; and passed the first day and night with captain Maclean, a gentleman who has lived some time in the East Indies, but having dethroned no nabob, is not too rich to settle in his own country.

Next day the wind was fair, and we might have had an easy passage to Mull; but having, contrarily to our own intention, landed upon a new island, we would not leave it wholly unexamined. We, therefore, suffered the vessel to depart without us, and trusted the skies for another wind.

Mr. Maclean of Col, having a very numerous family, has, for some time past, resided at Aberdeen, that he may superintend their education, and leaves the young gentleman, our friend, to govern his dominions, with the full power of a Highland chief. By the absence of the laird's family, our entertainment was made more difficult, because the house was, in a great degree, disfurnished; but young Col's kindness and activity supplied all defects, and procured us more than sufficient accommodation.

Here I first mounted a little Highland steed; and if there had been many spectators, should have been somewhat ashamed of my figure in the march. The horses of the islands, as of other barren countries, are very low:

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they are, indeed, musculous and strong, beyond what their size gives reason for expecting; but a bulky man upon one of their backs makes a very disproportionate appearance.

From the habitation of captain Maclean we went to Grissipol, but called by the way on Mr. Hector Maclean, the minister of Col, whom we found in a hut, that is, a house of only one floor, but with windows and chimney, and not inelegantly furnished. Mr. Maclean has the reputation of great learning: he is seventy-seven years old, but not infirm, with a look of venerable dignity, excelling what I remember in any other man.

His conversation was not unsuitable to his appearance. I lost some of his good will, by treating a heretical writer with more regard than, in his opinion, a heretick could deserve. I honoured his orthodoxy, and did not much censure his asperity. A man who has settled his opinions, does not love to have the tranquillity of his conviction disturbed; and at seventy-seven it is time to be in earnest.

Mention was made of the Erse translation of the New Testament, which has been lately published, and of which the learned Mr. Macqueen of Sky spoke with commendation; but Mr. Maclean said, he did not use it, because he could make the text more intelligible to his auditors by an extemporary version. From this I inferred, that the language of the translation was not the language of the isle of Col.

He has no publick edifice for the exercise of his ministry; and can officiate to no greater number than a room can contain; and the room of a hut is not very large. This is all the opportunity of worship that is now granted to the inhabitants of the islands, some of whom must travel thither, perhaps, ten miles. Two chapels were erected by their ancestors, of which I saw the skeletons, which now stand faithful witnesses of the triumph of reformation.

The want of churches is not the only impediment to piety; there is likewise a want of ministers. A parish often contains more islands than one; and each island can

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have the minister only in its own turn. At Raasay they had, I think, a right to service only every third Sunday. All the provision made by the present ecclesiastical constitution, for the inhabitants of about a hundred square miles, is a prayer and sermon in a little room, once in three weeks: and even this parsimonious distribution is at the mercy of the weather: and in those islands where the minister does not reside, it is impossible to tell how many weeks or months may pass, without any publick exercise of religion.

After a short conversation with Mr. Maclean, we went on to Grissipol, a house and farm tenanted by Mr. Macsweyn, where I saw more of the ancient life of a Highlander than I had yet found. Mrs. Macsweyn could speak no English, and had never seen any other places than the islands of Sky, Mull, and Col: but she was hospitable and good-humoured, and spread her table with sufficient liberality. We found tea here, as in every other place, but our spoons were of horn.

The house of Grissipol stands by a brook very clear, and which is, I suppose, one of the most copious streams in the island. This place was the scene of an action, much celebrated in the traditional history of Col, but which probably no two relaters will tell alike.

Some time, in the obscure ages, Macneil of Barra married the lady Maclean, who had the isle of Col for her jointure. Whether Macneil detained Col, when the widow was dead, or whether she lived so long as to make her heirs impatient, is perhaps not now known. The younger son, called John Gerves or John the Giant, a man of great strength, who was then in Ireland, either for safety or for education, dreamed of recovering his inheritance; and getting some adventurers together, which in those unsettled times was not hard to do, invaded Col. He was driven away, but was not discouraged, and collecting new followers, in three years came again with fifty men. In is way he stopped at Artorinish in Morvern, where his uncle was prisoner to Macleod, and was then with his ene-

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mies in a tent. Maclean took with him only one servant, whom he ordered to stay at the outside; and where he should see the tent press outwards, to strike with his dirk; it being the intention of Maclean, as any man provoked him, to lay hands upon him, and push him back. He entered the tent alone, with his Lochabar axe in his hand, and struck such terrour into the whole assembly, that they dismissed his uncle.

When he landed at Col, he saw the sentinel, who kept watch towards the sea, running on to Grissipol, to give Macneil, who was there with a hundred and twenty men, an account of the invasion. He told Macgill, one of his followers, that if he intercepted that dangerous intelligence, by catching the courier, he would give him certain lands in Mull. Upon this promise, Macgill pursued the messenger, and either killed or stopped him; and his posterity, till very lately, held the lands in Mull.

The alarm being thus prevented, he came unexpectedly upon Macneil. Chiefs were in those days never wholly unprovided for an enemy. A fight ensued, in which one of their followers is said to have given an extraordinary proof of activity, by bounding backwards over the brook of Grissipol. Macneil being killed, and many of his clan destroyed, Maclean took possession of the island, which the Macneils attempted to conquer by another invasion, but were defeated and repulsed.

Maclean, in his turn, invaded the estate of the Macneils, took the castle of Brecacig, and conquered the isle of Barra, which he held for seven years, and then restored it to the heirs.

From Grissipol Mr. Maclean conducted us to his father's seat; a neat new house erected near the old castle, I think, by the last proprietor. Here we were allowed to take our station, and lived very commodiously while we waited for moderate weather and a fair wind, which we did not so soon obtain, but we had time to get some information of the present state of Col, partly by inquiry, and partly by occasional excursions.

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Col is computed to be thirteen miles in length, and three in breadth. Both the ends are the property of the duke of Argyle, but the middle belongs to Maclean, who is called Col, as the only laird.

Col is not properly rocky; it is rather one continued rock, of a surface much diversified with protuberances, and covered with a thin layer of earth, which is often broken, and discovers the stone. Such a soil is not for plants that strike deep roots; and perhaps in the whole island nothing has ever yet grown to the height of a table. The uncultivated parts are clothed with heath, among which industry has interspersed spots of grass and corn; but no attempt has been made to raise a tree. Young Col, who has a very laudable desire of improving his patrimony, purposes some time to plant an orchard; which, if it be sheltered by a wall, may perhaps succeed. He has introduced the culture of turnips, of which he has a field, where the whole work was performed by his own hand. His intention is to provide food for his cattle in the winter. This innovation was considered by Mr. Macsweyn as the idle project of a young head, heated with English fancies; but he has now found that turnips will really grow, and that hungry sheep and cows will really eat them.

By such acquisitions as these, the Hebrides may in time rise above their annual distress. Wherever heath will grow, there is reason to think something better may draw nourishment; and by trying the production of other places, plants will be found suitable to every soil.

Col has many lochs, some of which have trouts and eels, and others have never yet been stocked; another proof of the negligence of the islanders, who might take fish in the inland waters, when they cannot go to sea.

Their quadrupeds are horses, cows, sheep, and goats. They have neither deer, hares, nor rabbits. They have no vermin except rats, which have been lately brought thither by sea, as to other places; and are free from serpents, frogs, and toads.

The harvest in Col, and in Lewis, is ripe sooner than in

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Sky, and the winter in Col is never cold, but very tempestuous. I know not that I ever heard the wind so loud in any other place; and Mr. Boswell observed that its noise was all its own, for there were no trees to increase it.

Noise is not the worst effect of the tempests; for they have thrown the sand from the shore over a considerable part of the land, and it is said still to encroach and destroy more and more pasture; but I am not of opinion, that by any surveys or land-marks, its limits have been ever fixed, or its progression ascertained. If one man has confidence enough to say, that it advances, nobody can bring any proof to support him in denying it. The reason why it is not spread to a greater extent, seems to be, that the wind and rain come almost together, and that it is made close and heavy by the wet before the storms can put it in motion. So thick is the bed, and so small the particles, that if a traveller should be caught by a sudden gust in dry weather, he would find it very difficult to escape with life.

For natural curiosities I was shown only two great masses of stone, which lie loose upon the ground; one on the top of a hill, and the other at a small distance from the bottom. They certainly were never put into their present places by human strength or skill; and though an earthquake might have broken off the lower stone, and rolled it into the valley, no account can be given of the other, which lies on the hill, unless, which I forgot to examine, there be still near it some higher rock, from which it might be torn. All nations have a tradition, that their earliest ancestors were giants, and these stones are said to have been thrown up and down by a giant and his mistress. There are so many important things of which human knowledge can give no account, that it may be forgiven us, if we speculate no longer on two stones in Col.

This island is very populous. About nine-and-twenty years ago, the fencible men of Col were reckoned one hundred and forty; which is the sixth of eight hundred and forty; and probably some contrived to be left out of the list. The minister told us, that a few years ago the

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inhabitants were eight hundred, between the ages of seven and of seventy. Round numbers are seldom exact. But in this case the authority is good, and the errour likely to be little. If to the eight hundred be added what the laws of computation require, they will be increased to at least a thousand; and if the dimensions of the country have been accurately related, every mile maintains more than twenty-five.

This proportion of habitation is greater than the appearance of the country seems to admit: for wherever the eye wanders, it sees much waste and little cultivation. I am more inclined to extend the land, of which no measure has ever been taken, than to diminish the people, who have been really numbered. Let it be supposed, that a computed mile contains a mile and a half, as was commonly found true in the mensuration of the English roads, and we shall then allot nearly twelve to a mile, which agrees much better with ocular observation.

Here, as in Sky, and other islands, are the laird, the tacksmen, and the under-tenants.

Mr. Maclean, the laird, has very extensive possessions, being proprietor, not only of far the greater part of Col, but of the extensive island of Rum, and a very considerable territory in Mull.

Rum is one of the larger islands, almost square, and therefore of great capacity in proportion to its sides. By the usual method of estimating computed extent, it may contain more than a hundred and twenty square miles.

It originally belonged to Clanronald, and was purchased by Col; who, in some dispute about the bargain, made Clanronald prisoner, and kept him nine months in confinement. Its owner represents it as mountainous, rugged, and barren. In the hills there are red deer. The horses are very small, but of a breed eminent for beauty. Col, not long ago, bought one of them from a tenant; who told him, that as he was of a shape uncommonly elegant, he could not sell him but at a high price; and that whoever had him should pay a guinea and a half.

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There are said to be in Barra a race of horses yet smaller, of which the highest is not above thirty-six inches.

The rent of Rum is not great. Mr. Maclean declared that he should be very rich, if he could set his land at two-pence halfpenny an acre. The inhabitants are fifty-eight families, who continued papists for some time after the laird became a protestant. Their adherence to their old religion was strengthened by the countenance of the laird's sister, a zealous Romanist, till one Sunday, as they were going to mass under the conduct of their patroness, Maclean met them on the way, gave one of them a blow on the head with a *yellow stick*, I suppose a cane, for which the Erse had no name, and drove them to the kirk, from which they have never since departed. Since the use of this method of conversion, the inhabitants of Egg and Canna, who continue papists, call the protestantism of Rum, the religion of the *yellow stick*.

The only popish islands are Egg and Canna. Egg is the principal island of a parish, in which, though he has no congregation, the protestant minister resides. I have heard of nothing curious in it, but the cave in which a former generation of the islanders were smothered by Macleod.

If we had travelled with more leisure, it had not been fit to have neglected the popish islands. Popery is favourable to ceremony; and, among ignorant nations, ceremony is the only preservative of tradition. Since protestantism was extended to the savage parts of Scotland, it has, perhaps, been one of the chief labours of the ministers to abolish stated observances, because they continued the remembrance of the former religion. We, therefore, who came to hear old traditions, and see antiquated manners, should, probably, have found them amongst the papists.

Canna, the other popish island, belongs to Clanronald. It is said not to comprise more than twelve miles of land, and yet maintains as many inhabitants as Rum.

We were at Col under the protection of the young laird, without any of the distresses which Mr. Pennant, in a

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fit of simple credulity, seems to think almost worthy of an elegy by Ossian. Wherever we roved, we were pleased to see the reverence with which his subjects regarded him. He did not endeavour to dazzle them by any magnificence of dress; his only distinction was a feather in his bonnet; but as soon as he appeared, they forsook their work and clustered about him: he took them by the hand, and they seemed mutually delighted. He has the proper disposition of a chieftain, and seems desirous to continue the customs of his house. The bagpiper played regularly, when dinner was served, whose person and dress made a good appearance; and he brought no disgrace upon the family of Rankin, which has long supplied the lairds of Col with hereditary musick.

The tacksmen of Col seem to live with less dignity and convenience than those of Sky; where they had good houses, and tables, not only plentiful, but delicate. In Col only two houses pay the window tax; for only two have six windows, which, I suppose, are the laird's and Mr. Macsweyn's.

The rents have, till within seven years, been paid in kind, but the tenants finding that cattle and corn varied in their price, desired for the future, to give their landlord money; which, not having yet arrived at the philosophy of commerce, they consider as being every year of the same value.

We were told of a particular mode of undertenure. The tacksman admits some of his inferiour neighbours to the cultivation of his grounds, on condition that, performing all the work, and giving a third part of the seed, they shall keep a certain number of cows, sheep, and goats, and reap a third part of the harvest. Thus by less than the tillage of two acres they pay the rent of one.

There are tenants below the rank of tacksmen, that have got smaller tenants under them; for in every place, where money is not the general equivalent, there must be some whose labour is immediately paid by daily food.

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A country that has no money, is by no means convenient for beggars, both because such countries are commonly poor, and because charity requires some trouble and some thought. A penny is easily given upon the first impulse of compassion, or impatience of importunity; but few will deliberately search their cupboards or their granaries to find out something to give. A penny is likewise easily spent; but victuals, if they are unprepared, require house-room, and fire, and utensils, which the beggar knows not where to find.

Yet beggars there sometimes are, who wander from island to island. We had, in our passage to Mull, the company of a woman and her child, who had exhausted the charity of Col. The arrival of a beggar on an island is accounted a sinistrous event. Every body considers that he shall have the less for what he gives away. Their alms, I believe, is generally oatmeal.

Near to Col is another island called Tireye, eminent for its fertility. Though it has but half the extent of Rum, it is so well peopled, that there have appeared, not long ago, nine hundred and fourteen at a funeral. The plenty of this island enticed beggars to it, who seemed so burdensome to the inhabitants, that a formal compact was drawn up, by which they obliged themselves to grant no more relief to casual wanderers, because they had among them an indigent woman of high birth, whom they considered as entitled to all that they could spare. I have read the stipulation, which was indited with juridical formality, but was never made valid by regular subscription.

If the inhabitants of Col have nothing to give, it is not that they are oppressed by their landlord: their leases seem to be very profitable. One farmer, who pays only seven pounds a year, has maintained seven daughters and three sons, of whom the eldest is educated at Aberdeen for the ministry; and now, at every vacation, opens a school in Col.

Life is here, in some respects, improved beyond the

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condition of some other islands. In Sky, what is wanted can only be bought, as the arrival of some wandering pedler may afford an opportunity; but in Col there is a standing shop, and in Mull there are two. A shop in the islands, as in other places of little frequentation, is a repository of every thing requisite for common use. Mr. Boswell's journal was filled, and he bought some paper in Col. To a man that ranges the streets of London, where he is tempted to contrive wants for the pleasure of supplying them, a shop affords no image worthy of attention; but in an island it turns the balance of existence between good and evil. To live in perpetual want of little things, is a state not, indeed, of torture, but of constant vexation. I have in Sky had some difficulty to find ink for a letter; and if a woman breaks her needle, the work is at a stop.

As it is, the islanders are obliged to content themselves with succedaneous means for many common purposes. I have seen the chief man of a very wide district riding with a halter for a bridle, and governing his hobby with a wooden curb.

The people of Col, however, do not want dexterity to supply some of their necessities. Several arts which make trades, and demand apprenticeships in great cities, are here the practices of daily economy. In every house candles are made, both moulded and dipped. Their wicks are small shreds of linen cloth. They all know how to extract from the cuddy oil for their lamps. They all tan skins, and make brogues.

As we travelled through Sky, we saw many cottages, but they very frequently stood single on the naked ground. In Col, where the hills opened a place convenient for habitation, we found a petty village, of which every hut had a little garden adjoining; thus they made an appearance of social commerce and mutual offices, and of some attention to convenience and future supply. There is not in the Western Islands any collection of buildings that can make pretensions to be called a town, except in the isle of Lewis, which I have not seen.

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If Lewis is distinguished by a town, Col has also something peculiar. The young laird has attempted what no islander perhaps ever thought on. He has begun a road capable of a wheel-carriage. He has carried it about a mile, and will continue it by annual elongation from his house to the harbour.

Of taxes here is no reason for complaining; they are paid by a very easy composition. The malt-tax for Col is twenty shillings. Whisky is very plentiful; there are several stills in the island, and more is made than the inhabitants consume.

The great business of insular policy is now to keep the people in their own country. As the world has been let in upon them, they have heard of happier climates and less arbitrary government; and if they are disgusted, have emissaries among them ready to offer them land and houses, as a reward for deserting their chief and clan. Many have departed both from the main of Scotland, and from the islands; and all that go may be considered as subjects lost to the British crown; for a nation scattered in the boundless regions of America resembles rays diverging from a focus. All the rays remain, but the heat is gone. Their power consisted in their concentration: when they are dispersed, they have no effect.

It may be thought that they are happier by the change; but they are not happy as a nation, for they are a nation no longer. As they contribute not to the prosperity of any community, they must want that security, that dignity, that happiness, whatever it be, which a prosperous community throws back upon individuals.

The inhabitants of Col have not yet learned to be weary of their heath and rocks, but attend their agriculture and their dairies, without listening to American seducements.

There are some, however, who think that this emigration has raised terrour disproportionate to its real evil; and that it is only a new mode of doing what was always done. The Highlands, they say, never maintained their

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natural inhabitants; but the people, when they found themselves too numerous, instead of extending cultivation, provided for themselves by a more compendious method, and sought better fortune in other countries. They did not, indeed, go away in collective bodies, but withdrew invisibly, a few at a time; but the whole number of fugitives was not less, and the difference between other times and this, is only the same as between evaporation and effusion.

This is plausible, but I am afraid it is not true. Those who went before, if they were not sensibly missed, as the argument supposes, must have gone either in less number, or in a manner less detrimental, than at present; because formerly there was no complaint. Those who then left the country were generally the idle dependants on overburdened families, or men who had no property; and, therefore, carried away only themselves. In the present eagerness of emigration, families, and almost communities, go away together. Those who were considered as prosperous and wealthy sell their stock, and carry away the money. Once none went away but the useless and poor; in some parts there is now reason to fear, that none will stay but those who are too poor to remove themselves, and too useless to be removed at the cost of others.

Of antiquity there is not more knowledge in Col than in other places; but every where something may be gleaned.

How ladies were portioned, when there was no money, it would be difficult for an Englishman to guess. In 1649, Maclean of Dronart in Mull married his sister Fingala to Maclean of Col, with a hundred and eighty kine; and stipulated, that if she became a widow, her jointure should be three hundred and sixty. I suppose some proportionate tract of land was appropriated to their pasturage.

The disposition to pompous and expensive funerals, which has, at one time or other, prevailed in most parts of the civilized world, is not yet suppressed in the islands, though some of the ancient solemnities are worn away,

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and singers are no longer hired to attend the procession. Nineteen years ago, at the burial of the laird of Col, were killed thirty cows, and about fifty sheep. The number of the cows is positively told, and we must suppose other victuals in like proportion.

Mr. Maclean informed us of an old game, of which he did not tell the original, but which may, perhaps, be used in other places, where the reason of it is not yet forgot. At new-year's eve, in the hall or castle of the laird, where, at festal seasons, there may be supposed a very numerous company, one man dresses himself in a cow's hide, upon which other men beat with sticks. He runs with all this noise round the house, which all the company quits in a counterfeited fright; the door is then shut. At new-year's eve there is no great pleasure to be had out of doors in the Hebrides. They are sure soon to recover from their terrour enough to solicit for readmission; which, for the honour of poetry, is not to be obtained but by repeating a verse, with which those that are knowing and provident take care to be furnished.

Very near the house of Maclean stands the castle of Col, which was the mansion of the laird, till the house was built. It is built upon a rock, as Mr. Boswell remarked, that it might not be mined. It is very strong, and having been not long uninhabited, is yet in repair. On the wall was, not long ago, a stone with an inscription, importing, that if any man of the clan of Maclonich shall appear before this castle, though he come at midnight, with a man's head in his hand, he shall there find safety and protection against all but the king.

This is an old Highland treaty, made upon a very memorable occasion. Maclean, the son of John Gerves, who recovered Col, and conquered Barra, had obtained, it is said, from James the second, a grant of the lands of Lochiel, forfeited, I suppose, by some offence against the state.

Forfeited estates were not in those days quietly resigned; Maclean, therefore, went with an armed force to

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seize his new possessions, and, I know not for what reason, took his wife with him. The Camerons rose in defence of their chief, and a battle was fought at Loch Ness, near the place where Fort Augustus now stands, in which Lochiel obtained the victory, and Maclean, with his followers, was defeated and destroyed.

The lady fell into the hands of the conquerors, and being found pregnant, was placed in the custody of Maclonich, one of a tribe or family branched from Cameron, with orders, if she brought a boy, to destroy him, if a girl, to spare her.

Maclonich's wife, who was with child likewise, had a girl about the same time at which lady Maclean brought a boy; and Maclonich, with more generosity to his captive, than fidelity to his trust, contrived that the children should be changed.

Maclean being thus preserved from death, in time recovered his original patrimony; and in gratitude to his friend, made his castle a place of refuge to any of the clan that should think himself in danger; and as a proof of reciprocal confidence, Maclean took upon himself and his posterity the care of educating the heir of Maclonich.

This story, like all other traditions of the Highlands, is variously related; but though some circumstances are uncertain, the principal fact is true. Maclean undoubtedly owed his preservation to Maclonich; for the treaty between the two families has been strictly observed: it did not sink into disuse and oblivion, but continued in its full force, while the chieftains retained their power. I have read a demand of protection, made not more than thirty-seven years ago, for one of the Maclonichs, named Ewen Cameron, who had been accessory to the death of Macmartin, and had been banished by Lochiel, his lord, for a certain term; at the expiration of which he returned married from France; but the Macmartins, not satisfied with the punishment, when he attempted to settle, still threatened him with vengeance. He, therefore, asked, and obtained, shelter in the isle of Col.

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The power of protection subsists no longer; but what the law permits is yet continued, and Maclean of Col now educates the heir of Maclonich.

There still remains in the islands, though it is passing fast away, the custom of fosterage. A laird, a man of wealth and eminence, sends his child, either male or female, to a tacksman, or tenant, to be fostered. It is not always his own tenant, but some distant friend, that obtains this honour; for an honour such a trust is very reasonably thought. The terms of fosterage seem to vary in different islands. In Mull, the father sends with his child a certain number of cows, to which the same number is added by the fosterer. The father appropriates a proportionable extent of ground, without rent, for their pasturage. If every cow brings a calf, half belongs to the fosterer, and half to the child; but if there be only one calf between two cows, it is the child's, and when the child returns to the parents, it is accompanied by all the cows given, both by the father and by the fosterer, with half of the increase of the stock by propagation. These beasts are considered as a portion, and called *Macalive* cattle, of which the father has the produce, but is supposed not to have the full property, but to owe the same number to the child, as a portion to the daughter, or a stock for the son.

Children continue with the fosterer, perhaps six years, and cannot, where this is the practice, be considered as burdensome. The fosterer, if he gives four cows, receives likewise four, and has, while the child continues with him, grass for eight without rent, with half the calves, and all the milk, for which he pays only four cows when he dismisses his *dalt*, for that is the name for a fostered child.

Fosterage is, I believe, sometimes performed upon more liberal terms. Our friend, the young laird of Col, was fostered by Macsweyn of Grissipol. Macsweyn then lived a tenant to sir James Macdonald in the isle of Sky; and therefore Col, whether he sent him cattle or not, could

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grant him no land. The *dalt*, however, at his return, brought back a considerable number of *Macalive* cattle, and of the friendship so formed there have been good effects. When Macdonald raised his rents, Macsweyn was, like other tenants, discontented, and, resigning his farm, removed from Sky to Col, and was established at Grissipol.

These observations we made by favour of the contrary wind that drove us to Col, an island not often visited; for there is not much to amuse curiosity, or to attract avarice.

The ground has been hitherto, I believe, used chiefly for pasturage. In a district, such as the eye can command, there is a general herdsman, who knows all the cattle of the neighbourhood, and whose station is upon a hill from which he surveys the lower grounds; and if one man's cattle invade another's grass, drives them back to their own borders. But other means of profit begin to be found; kelp is gathered and burnt, and sloops are loaded with the concreted ashes. Cultivation is likely to be improved by the skill and encouragement of the present heir, and the inhabitants of those obscure valleys will partake of the general progress of life.

The rents of the parts which belong to the duke of Argyle, have been raised from fifty-five to one hundred and five pounds, whether from the land or the sea I cannot tell. The bounties of the sea have lately been so great, that a farm in Southuist has risen in ten years from a rent of thirty pounds to one hundred and eighty.

He who lives in Col, and finds himself condemned to solitary meals, and incommunicable reflection, will find the usefulness of that middle order of tacksmen, which some, who applaud their own wisdom, are wishing to destroy. Without intelligence, man is not social, he is only gregarious; and little intelligence will there be, where all are constrained to daily labour, and every mind must wait upon the hand.

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After having listened for some days to the tempest, and wandered about the island till our curiosity was satisfied, we began to think about our departure. To leave Col in October was not very easy. We, however, found a sloop which lay on the coast to carry kelp; and for a price which we thought levied upon our necessities, the master agreed to carry us to Mull, whence we might readily pass back to Scotland.

As we were to catch the first favourable breath, we spent the night not very elegantly nor pleasantly in the vessel, and were landed next day at Tobor Morar, a port in Mull, which appears, to an unexperienced eye, formed for the security of ships; for its mouth is closed by a small island, which admits them through narrow channels into a basin sufficiently capacious. They are, indeed, safe from the sea, but there is a hollow between the mountains, through which the wind issues from the land with very mischievous violence.

There was no danger while we were there, and we found several other vessels at anchor; so that the port had a very commercial appearance.

The young laird of Col, who had determined not to let us lose his company, while there was any difficulty remaining, came over with us. His influence soon appeared; for he procured us horses, and conducted us to the house of doctor Maclean, where we found very kind entertainment and very pleasing conversation. Miss Maclean, who was born, and had been bred at Glasgow, having removed with her father to Mull, added to other qualifications, a great knowledge of the Erse language, which she had not learned in her childhood, but gained by study, and was the only interpreter of Erse poetry that I could ever find.

The isle of Mull is, perhaps, in extent the third of the Hebrides. It is not broken by waters, nor shot into promontories, but is a solid and compact mass, of breadth nearly equal to its length. Of the dimensions of the larger islands, there is no knowledge approaching to exact-

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ness. I am willing to estimate it as containing about three hundred square miles.

Mull had suffered, like Sky, by the black winter of seventy-one, in which, contrary to all experience, a continued frost detained the snow eight weeks upon the ground. Against a calamity never known, no provision had been made, and the people could only pine in helpless misery. One tenant was mentioned, whose cattle perished to the value of three hundred pounds; a loss which probably more than the life of man is necessary to repair. In countries like these, the descriptions of famine become intelligible. Where, by vigorous and artful cultivation of a soil naturally fertile, there is commonly a superfluous growth both of grain and grass; where the fields are crowded with cattle; and where every hand is able to attract wealth from a distance, by making something that promotes ease, or gratifies vanity, a dear year produces only a comparative want, which is rather seen than felt, and which terminates commonly in no worse effect, than that of condemning the lower orders of the community to sacrifice a little luxury to convenience, or at most a little convenience to necessity.

But where the climate is unkind, and the ground penurious, so that the most fruitful years produce only enough to maintain themselves; where life unimproved, and unadorned, fades into something little more than naked existence, and every one is busy for himself, without any arts by which the pleasure of others may be increased; if to the daily burden of distress any additional weight be added, nothing remains but to despair and die. In Mull the disappointment of a harvest, or a murrain among the cattle, cuts off the regular provision; and they who have no manufactures can purchase no part of the superfluities of other countries. The consequence of a bad season is here not scarcity, but emptiness; and they whose plenty was barely a supply of natural and present need, when that slender stock fails, must perish with hunger.

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All travel has its advantages. If the passenger visits better countries, he may learn to improve his own; and if fortune carries him to worse, he may learn to enjoy it.

Mr. Boswell's curiosity strongly impelled him to survey Iona, or Icolmkill, which was, to the early ages, the great school of theology, and is supposed to have been the place of sepulture for the ancient kings. I, though less eager, did not oppose him.

That we might perform this expedition, it was necessary to traverse a great part of Mull. We passed a day at Dr. Maclean's, and could have been well contented to stay longer. But Col provided us horses, and we pursued our journey. This was a day of inconvenience, for the country is very rough, and my horse was but little. We travelled many hours through a tract, black and barren, in which, however, there were the relicks of humanity; for we found a ruined chapel in our way.

It is natural, in traversing this gloom of desolation, to inquire, whether something may not be done to give nature a more cheerful face; and whether those hills and moors that afford heath, cannot, with a little care and labour, bear something better? The first thought that occurs is to cover them with trees, for that in many of these naked regions trees will grow, is evident, because stumps and roots are yet remaining; and the speculatist hastily proceeds to censure that negligence and laziness that has omitted, for so long a time, so easy an improvement.

To drop seeds into the ground, and attend their growth, requires little labour and no skill. He who remembers that all the woods, by which the wants of man have been supplied from the deluge till now, were self-sown, will not easily be persuaded to think all the art and preparation necessary, which the georgick writers prescribe to planters. Trees certainly have covered the earth with very little culture. They wave their tops among the rocks of Norway, and might thrive as well in the Highlands and Hebrides.

But there is a frightful interval between the seed and

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timber. He that calculates the growth of trees, has the unwelcome remembrance of the shortness of life driven hard upon him. He knows that he is doing what will never benefit himself; and when he rejoices to see the stem rise, is disposed to repine that another shall cut it down.

Plantation is naturally the employment of a mind unburdened with care, and vacant to futurity, saturated with present good, and at leisure to derive gratification from the prospect of posterity. He that pines with hunger, is in little care how others shall be fed. The poor man is seldom studious to make his grandson rich. It may be soon discovered, why in a place, which hardly supplies the cravings of necessity, there has been little attention to the delights of fancy, and why distant convenience is unregarded, where the thoughts are turned with incessant solicitude upon every possibility of immediate advantage.

Neither is it quite so easy to raise large woods as may be conceived. Trees intended to produce timber must be sown where they are to grow; and ground sown with trees must be kept useless for a long time, enclosed at an expense from which many will be discouraged by the remoteness of the profit, and watched with that attention, which, in places where it is most needed, will neither be given nor bought. That it cannot be ploughed is evident: and if cattle be allowed to graze upon it, they will devour the plants as fast as they rise. Even in coarser countries, where herds and flocks are not fed, not only the deer and the wild goats will browse upon them, but the hare and rabbit will nibble them. It is, therefore, reasonable to believe, what I do not remember any naturalist to have remarked, that there was a time when the world was very thinly inhabited by beasts, as well as men, and that the woods had leisure to rise high before animals had bred numbers sufficient to intercept them.

Sir James Macdonald, in part of the wastes of his territory, set or sowed trees, to the number, as I have been told, of several millions, expecting, doubtless, that they would grow up into future navies and cities; but for want

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of enclosure, and of that care which is always necessary, and will hardly ever be taken, all his cost and labour have been lost, and the ground is likely to continue an useless heath.

Having not any experience of a journey in Mull, we had no doubt of reaching the sea by daylight, and, therefore, had not left Dr. Maclean's very early. We travelled diligently enough, but found the country, for road there was none, very difficult to pass. We were always struggling with some obstruction or other, and our vexation was not balanced by any gratification of the eye or mind. We were now long enough acquainted with hills and heath to have lost the emotion that they once raised, whether pleasing or painful, and had our mind employed only on our own fatigue. We were, however, sure, under Col's protection, of escaping all real evils. There was no house in Mull to which he could not introduce us. He had intended to lodge us, for that night, with a gentleman that lived upon the coast, but discovered on the way, that he then lay in bed without hope of life.

We resolved not to embarrass a family, in a time of so much sorrow, if any other expedient could be found; and as the island of Ulva was over-against us, it was determined that we should pass the strait, and have recourse to the laird, who, like the other gentlemen of the islands, was known to Col. We expected to find a ferry-boat, but when at last we came to the water, the boat was gone.

We were now again at a stop. It was the sixteenth of October, a time when it is not convenient to sleep in the Hebrides without a cover, and there was no house within our reach, but that which we had already declined.

While we stood deliberating, we were happily espied from an Irish ship, that lay at anchor in the strait. The master saw that we wanted a passage, and with great civility sent us his boat, which quickly conveyed us to Ulva, where we were very liberally entertained by Mr. Macquarry.

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To Ulva we came in the dark, and left it before noon the next day. A very exact description, therefore, will not be expected. We were told, that it is an island of no great extent, rough and barren, inhabited by the Macquarrys; a clan not powerful nor numerous, but of antiquity, which most other families are content to reverence. The name is supposed to be a depravation of some other; for the Erse language does not afford it any etymology. Macquarry is proprietor both of Ulva and some adjacent islands, among which is Staffa, so lately raised to renown by Mr. Banks.

When the islanders were reproached with their ignorance, or insensibility of the wonders of Staffa, they had not much to reply. They had, indeed, considered it little, because they had always seen it; and none but philosophers, nor they always, are struck with wonder, otherwise than by novelty. How would it surprise an unenlightened ploughman, to hear a company of sober men, inquiring by what power the hand tosses a stone, or why the stone, when it is tossed, falls to the ground!

Of the ancestors of Macquarry, who thus lies hid in his unfrequented island, I have found memorials in all places where they could be expected.

Inquiring after the relicks of former manners, I found that in Ulva, and, I think, no where else, is continued the payment of the *mercheta mulierum*; a fine, in old times, due to the laird at the marriage of a virgin. The original of this claim, as of our tenure of *borough English*, is variously delivered. It is pleasant to find ancient customs in old families. This payment, like others, was, for want of money, made anciently in the produce of the land. Macquarry was used to demand a sheep, for which he now takes a crown, by that inattention to the uncertain proportion between the value and the denomination of money, which has brought much disorder into Europe. A sheep has always the same power of supplying human wants, but a crown will bring at one time more, at another less.

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Ulva was not neglected by the piety of ancient times: it has still to show what was once a church.

In the morning we went again into the boat, and were landed on Inch Kenneth, an island about a mile long, and perhaps half a mile broad, remarkable for pleasantness and fertility. It is verdant and grassy, and fit both for pasture and tillage; but it has no trees. Its only inhabitants were sir Allan Maclean, and two young ladies, his daughters, with their servants.

Romance does not often exhibit a scene that strikes the imagination more than this little desert in these depths of western obscurity, occupied not by a gross herdsman, or amphibious fisherman, but by a gentleman and two ladies, of high birth, polished manners, and elegant conversation, who, in a habitation raised not very far above the ground, but furnished with unexpected neatness and convenience, practised all the kindness of hospitality, and refinement of courtesy.

Sir Allan is the chieftain of the great clan of Maclean, which is said to claim the second place among the Highland families, yielding only to Macdonald. Though, by the misconduct of his ancestors, most of the extensive territory, which would have descended to him, has been alienated, he still retains much of the dignity and authority of his birth. When soldiers were lately wanting for the American war, application was made to sir Allan, and he nominated a hundred men for the service, who obeyed the summons, and bore arms under his command.

He had then, for some time, resided with the young ladies in Inch Kenneth, where he lives, not only with plenty, but with elegance, having conveyed to his cottage a collection of books, and what else is necessary to make his hours pleasant.

When we landed, we were met by sir Allan and the ladies, accompanied by Miss Macquarry, who had passed some time with them, and now returned to Ulva with her father.

We all walked together to the mansion, where we found

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one cottage for sir Allan, and, I think, two more for the domesticks and the offices. We entered, and wanted little that palaces afford. Our room was neatly floored, and well lighted; and our dinner, which was dressed in one of the other huts, was plentiful and delicate.

In the afternoon sir Allan reminded us, that the day was Sunday, which he never suffered to pass without some religious distinction, and invited us to partake in his acts of domestick worship; which I hope neither Mr. Boswell nor myself will be suspected of a disposition to refuse. The elder of the ladies read the English service.

Inch Kenneth was once a seminary of ecclesiasticks, subordinate, I suppose, to Icolmkill. Sir Allan had a mind to trace the foundations of the college, but neither I nor Mr. Boswell, who bends a keener eye on vacancy, were able to perceive them.

Our attention, however, was sufficiently engaged by a venerable chapel, which stands yet entire, except that the roof is gone. It is about sixty feet in length, and thirty in breadth. On one side of the altar is a bas-relief of the blessed virgin, and by it lies a little bell; which, though cracked, and without a clapper, has remained there for ages, guarded only by the venerableness of the place. The ground round the chapel is covered with grave-stones of chiefs and ladies; and still continues to be a place of sepulture.

Inch Kenneth is a proper prelude to Icolmkill. It was not without some mournful emotion that we contemplated the ruins of religious structures, and the monuments of the dead.

On the next day we took a more distinct view of the place, and went with the boat to see oysters in the bed, out of which the boatmen forced up as many as were wanted. Even Inch Kenneth has a subordinate island, named Sandiland, I suppose, in contempt, where we landed, and found a rock, with a surface of perhaps four acres, of which one is naked stone, another spread with sand and shells, some of which I picked up for their glossy beauty,

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and two covered with a little earth and grass, on which sir Allan has a few sheep. I doubt not but when there was a college at Inch Kenneth, there was a hermitage upon Sandiland.

Having wandered over those extensive plains, we committed ourselves again to the winds and waters; and after a voyage of about ten minutes, in which we met with nothing very observable, were again safe upon dry ground.

We told sir Allan our desire of visiting Icolmkill, and entreated him to give us his protection, and his company. He thought proper to hesitate a little; but the ladies hinted, that as they knew he would not finally refuse, he would do better if he preserved the grace of ready compliance. He took their advice, and promised to carry us on the morrow in his boat.

We passed the remaining part of the day in such amusements as were in our power. Sir Allan related the American campaign, and at evening one of the ladies played on her harpsichord, while Col and Mr. Boswell danced a Scottish reel with the other.

We could have been easily persuaded to a longer stay upon Inch Kenneth, but life will not be all passed in delight. The session at Edinburgh was approaching, from which Mr. Boswell could not be absent.

In the morning our boat was ready; it was high and strong. Sir Allan victualled it for the day, and provided able rowers. We now parted from the young laird of Col, who had treated us with so much kindness, and concluded his favours by consigning us to sir Allan. Here we had the last embrace of this amiable man, who, while these pages were preparing to attest his virtues, perished in the passage between Ulva and Inch Kenneth.

Sir Allan, to whom the whole region was well known, told us of a very remarkable cave, to which he would show us the way. We had been disappointed already by one cave, and were not much elevated by the expectation of another.

It was yet better to see it, and we stopped at some rocks

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on the coast of Mull. The mouth is fortified by vast fragments of stone, over which we made our way, neither very nimbly, nor very securely. The place, however, well repaid our trouble. The bottom, as far as the flood rushes in, was encumbered with large pebbles, but as we advanced was spread over with smooth sand. The breadth is about forty-five feet; the roof rises in an arch, almost regular, to a height which we could not measure; but I think it about thirty feet.

This part of our curiosity was nearly frustrated; for though we went to see a cave, and knew that caves are dark, we forgot to carry tapers, and did not discover our omission till we were awakened by our wants. Sir Allan then sent one of the boatmen into the country, who soon returned with one little candle. We were thus enabled to go forward, but could not venture far. Having passed inward from the sea to a great depth, we found on the right hand a narrow passage, perhaps not more than six feet wide, obstructed by great stones, over which we climbed, and came into a second cave, in breadth twenty-five feet. The air in this apartment was very warm, but not oppressive, nor loaded with vapours. Our light showed no tokens of a feculent or corrupted atmosphere. Here was a square stone, called, as we are told, *Fingal's table.*

If we had been provided with torches, we should have proceeded in our search, though we had already gone as far as any former adventurer, except some who are reported never to have returned; and measuring our way back, we found it more than a hundred and sixty yards, the eleventh part of a mile.

Our measures were not critically exact, having been made with a walking pole, such as it is convenient to carry in these rocky countries, of which I guessed the length by standing against it. In this there could be no great errour, nor do I much doubt but the Highlander, whom we employed, reported the number right. More nicety, however, is better, and no man should travel unprovided with instruments for taking heights and distances.

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There is yet another cause of errour not always easily surmounted, though more dangerous to the veracity of itinerary narratives, than imperfect mensuration. An observer deeply impressed by any remarkable spectacle, does not suppose that the traces will soon vanish from his mind, and having commonly no great convenience for writing, defers the description to a time of more leisure and better accommodation.

He who has not made the experiment, or who is not accustomed to require rigorous accuracy from himself, will scarcely believe how much a few hours take from certainty of knowledge, and distinctness of imagery; how the succession of objects will be broken, how separate parts will be confused, and how many particular features and discriminations will be compressed and conglobated into one gross and general idea.

To this dilatory notation must be imputed the false relations of travellers, where there is no imaginable motive to deceive. They trusted to memory, what cannot be trusted safely but to the eye, and told by guess what a few hours before they had known with certainty. Thus it was that Wheeler and Spon described with irreconcilable contrariety things which they surveyed together, and which both undoubtedly designed to show as they saw them.

When we had satisfied our curiosity in the cave, so far as our penury of light permitted us, we clambered again to our boats, and proceeded along the coast of Mull to a headland, called Atun, remarkable for the columnar form of the rocks, which rise in a series of pilasters, with a degree of regularity, which sir Allan thinks not less worthy of curiosity, than the shore of Staffa.

Not long after we came to another range of black rocks, which had the appearance of broken pilasters, set one behind another to a great depth. This place was chosen by sir Allan for our dinner. We were easily accommodated with seats, for the stones were of all heights, and refreshed ourselves and our boatmen, who could have no other rest till we were at Icolmkill.

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The evening was now approaching, and we were yet at a considerable distance from the end of our expedition. We could, therefore, stop no more to make remarks in the way, but set forward with some degree of eagerness. The day soon failed us, and the moon presented a very solemn and pleasing scene. The sky was clear, so that the eye commanded a wide circle: the sea was neither still nor turbulent; the wind neither silent nor loud. We were never far from one coast or another, on which, if the weather had become violent, we could have found shelter, and, therefore, contemplated at ease the region through which we glided in the tranquillity of the night, and saw now a rock, and now an island, grow gradually conspicuous, and gradually obscure. I committed the fault which I have just been censuring, in neglecting, as we passed, to note the series of this placid navigation.

We were very near an island, called Nun's Island, perhaps from an ancient convent. Here is said to have been dug the stone which was used in the buildings of Icolmkill. Whether it is now inhabited, we could not stay to inquire.

At last we came to Icolmkill, but found no convenience for landing. Our boat could not be forced very near the dry ground, and our Highlanders carried us over the water.

We were now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain

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of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.

We came too late to visit monuments; some care was necessary for ourselves. Whatever was in the island, sir Allan could demand, for the inhabitants were Macleans; but having little, they could not give us much. He went to the headman of the island, whom fame, but fame delights in amplifying, represents as worth no less than fifty pounds. He was, perhaps, proud enough of his guests, but ill prepared for our entertainment; however, he soon produced more provision than men not luxurious require. Our lodging was next to be provided. We found a barn well stocked with hay, and made our beds as soft as we could.

In the morning we rose and surveyed the place. The churches of the two convents are both standing, though unroofed. They were built of unhewn stone, but solid, and not inelegant. I brought away rude measures of the buildings, such as I cannot much trust myself, inaccurately taken, and obscurely noted. Mr. Pennant's delineations, which are doubtless exact, have made my unskilful description less necessary.

The episcopal church consists of two parts, separated by the belfry, and built at different times. The original church had, like others, the altar at one end, and the tower at the other; but as it grew too small, another building of equal dimension was added, and the tower then was necessarily in the middle.

That these edifices are of different ages seems evident. The arch of the first church is Roman, being part of a circle; that of the additional building is pointed, and therefore Gothick or Saracenical; the tower is firm, and wants only to be floored and covered.

Of the chambers or cells belonging to the monks, there are some walls remaining, but nothing approaching to a complete apartment.

The bottom of the church is so encumbered with mud and rubbish, that we could make no discoveries of curious

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inscriptions, and what there are have been already published. The place is said to be known where the black stones lie concealed, on which the old Highland chiefs, when they made contracts and alliances, used to take the oath, which was considered as more sacred than any other obligation, and which could not be violated without the blackest infamy. In those days of violence and rapine, it was of great importance to impress upon savage minds the sanctity of an oath, by some particular and extraordinary circumstances. They would not have recourse to the black stones, upon small or common occasions, and when they had established their faith by this tremendous sanction, inconstancy and treachery were no longer feared.

The chapel of the nunnery is now used by the inhabitants as a kind of general cowhouse, and the bottom is consequently too miry for examination. Some of the stones which covered the later abbesses have inscriptions, which might yet be read, if the chapel were cleansed. The roof of this, as of all the other buildings, is totally destroyed, not only because timber quickly decays when it is neglected, but because in an island utterly destitute of wood, it was wanted for use, and was consequently the first plunder of needy rapacity.

The chancel of the nuns' chapel is covered with an arch of stone, to which time has done no injury; and a small apartment communicating with the choir, on the north side, like the chapter-house in cathedrals, roofed with stone in the same manner, is likewise entire.

In one of the churches was a marble altar, which the superstition of the inhabitants has destroyed. Their opinion was, that a fragment of this stone was a defence against shipwrecks, fire, and miscarriages. In one corner of the church the basin for holy water is yet unbroken.

The cemetery of the nunnery was, till very lately, regarded with such reverence, that only women were buried in it. These relicks of veneration always produce some mournful pleasure. I could have forgiven a great injury more easily than the violation of this imaginary sanctity.

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South of the chapel stand the walls of a large room, which was probably the hall, or refectory of the nunnery. This apartment is capable of repair. Of the rest of the convent there are only fragments.

Besides the two principal churches, there are, I think, five chapels yet standing, and three more remembered. There are also crosses, of which two bear the names of St. John and St. Matthew.

A large space of ground about these consecrated edifices is covered with grave-stones, few of which have any inscription. He that surveys it, attended by an insular antiquary, may be told where the kings of many nations are buried, and if he loves to sooth his imagination with the thoughts that naturally rise in places where the great and the powerful lie mingled with the dust, let him listen in submissive silence; for if he asks any questions, his delight is at an end.

Iona has long enjoyed, without any very credible attestation, the honour of being reputed the cemetery of the Scottish kings. It is not unlikely, that, when the opinion of local sanctity was prevalent, the chieftains of the isles, and, perhaps, some of the Norwegian or Irish princes, were reposited in this venerable enclosure. But by whom the subterraneous vaults are peopled, is now utterly unknown. The graves are very numerous, and some of them undoubtedly contain the remains of men, who did not expect to be so soon forgotten.

Not far from this awful ground may be traced the garden of the monastery: the fishponds are yet discernible, and the aqueduct, which supplied them, is still in use.

There remains a broken building, which is called the Bishop's house, I know not by what authority. It was once the residence of some man above the common rank, for it has two stories and a chimney. We were shown a chimney at the other end, which was only a niche, without perforation; but so much does antiquarian credulity, or patriotick vanity prevail, that it was not much more safe to trust the eye of our instructer than the memory.

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There is in the island one house more, and only one, that has a chimney; we entered it, and found it neither wanting repair nor inhabitants; but to the farmers, who now possess it, the chimney is of no great value; for their fire was made on the floor, in the middle of the room, and notwithstanding the dignity of their mansion, they rejoiced, like their neighbours, in the comforts of smoke.

It is observed, that ecclesiastical colleges are always in the most pleasant and fruitful places. While the world allowed the monks their choice, it is surely no dishonour that they chose well. This island is remarkably fruitful. The village near the churches is said to contain seventy families, which, at five in a family, is more than a hundred inhabitants to a mile. There are perhaps other villages; yet both corn and cattle are annually exported.

But the fruitfulness of Iona is now its whole prosperity. The inhabitants are remarkably gross, and remarkably neglected: I know not if they are visited by any minister. The island, which was once the metropolis of learning and piety, has now no school for education, nor temple for worship, only two inhabitants that can speak English, and not one that can write or read.

The people are of the clan of Maclean; and though sir Allan had not been in the place for many years, he was received with all the reverence due to their chieftain. One of them, being sharply reprehended by him, for not sending him some rum, declared after his departure, in Mr. Boswell's presence, that he had no design of disappointing him, "for," said he, "I would cut my bones for him; and if he had sent his dog for it, he should have had it."

When we were to depart, our boat was left by the ebb at a great distance from the water, but no sooner did we wish it afloat, than the islanders gathered round it, and, by the union of many hands, pushed it down the beach; every man who could contribute his help seemed to think himself happy in the opportunity of being, for a moment, useful to his chief.

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We now left those illustrious ruins, by which Mr. Boswell was much affected, nor would I willingly be thought to have looked upon them without some emotion. Perhaps, in the revolutions of the world, Iona may be sometime again the instructress of the western regions.

It was no long voyage to Mull, where, under sir Allan's protection, we landed in the evening, and were entertained for the night by Mr. Maclean, a minister that lives upon the coast, whose elegance of conversation, and strength of judgment, would make him conspicuous in places of greater celebrity. Next day we dined with Dr. Maclean, another physician, and then travelled on to the house of a very powerful laird, Maclean of Lochbuy; for in this country every man's name is Maclean.

Where races are thus numerous, and thus combined, none but the chief of a clan is addressed by his name. The laird of Dunvegan is called Macleod, but other gentlemen of the same family are denominated by the places where they reside, as Raasay, or Talisker. The distinction of the meaner people is made by their christian names. In consequence of this practice, the laird of Macfarlane, an eminent genealogist, considered himself as disrespectfully treated, if the common addition was applied to him. "Mr. Macfarlane," said he, "may with equal propriety be said to many; but I, and I only, am Macfarlane."

Our afternoon journey was through a country of such gloomy desolation, that Mr. Boswell thought no part of the Highlands equally terrifick, yet we came without any difficulty, at evening, to Lochbuy, where we found a true Highland laird, rough and haughty, and tenacious of his dignity: who, hearing my name, inquired whether I was of the Johnstons of Glencoe, or of Ardnamurchan.

Lochbuy has, like the other insular chieftains, quitted the castle that sheltered his ancestors, and lives near it, in a mansion not very spacious or splendid. I have seen no houses in the islands much to be envied for convenience or magnificence, yet they bear testimony to the

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progress of arts and civility, as they show that rapine and surprise are no longer dreaded, and are much more commodious than the ancient fortresses.

The castles of the Hebrides, many of which are standing, and many ruined, were always built upon points of land, on the margin of the sea. For the choice of this situation there must have been some general reason, which the change of manners has left in obscurity. They were of no use in the days of piracy, as defences of the coast; for it was equally accessible in other places. Had they been seamarks or lighthouses, they would have been of more use to the invader than the natives, who could want no such directions on their own waters: for a watch-tower, a cottage on a hill would have been better, as it would have commanded a wider view.

If they be considered merely as places of retreat, the situation seems not well chosen; for the laird of an island is safest from foreign enemies in the centre: on the coast he might be more suddenly surprised than in the inland parts; and the invaders, if their enterprise miscarried, might more easily retreat. Some convenience, however, whatever it was, their position on the shore afforded; for uniformity of practice seldom continues long without good reason.

A castle in the islands is only a single tower of three or four stories, of which the walls are sometimes eight or nine feet thick, with narrow windows, and close winding stairs of stone. The top rises in a cone, or pyramid of stone, encompassed by battlements. The intermediate floors are sometimes frames of timber, as in common houses, and sometimes arches of stone, or alternately stone and timber; so that there was very little danger from fire. In the centre of every floor, from top to bottom, is the chief room, of no great extent, round which there are narrow cavities, or recesses formed by small vacuities, or by a double wall. I know not whether there be ever more than one fireplace. They had no capacity to contain many people, or much provision; but their enemies could

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seldom stay to blockade them; for if they failed in their first attack, their next care was to escape.

The walls were always too strong to be shaken by such desultory hostilities; the windows were too narrow to be entered, and the battlements too high to be scaled. The only danger was at the gates, over which the wall was built with a square cavity not unlike a chimney, continued to the top. Through this hollow the defendants let fall stones upon those who attempted to break the gate, and poured down water, perhaps scalding water, if the attack was made with fire. The castle of Lochbuy was secured by double doors, of which the outer was an iron grate.

In every castle is a well and a dungeon. The use of the well is evident. The dungeon is a deep subterraneous cavity, walled on the sides, and arched on the top, into which the descent is through a narrow door, by a ladder or a rope, so that it seems impossible to escape when the rope or ladder is drawn up. The dungeon was, I suppose, in war, a prison for such captives as were treated with severity; and in peace, for such delinquents as had committed crimes within the laird's jurisdiction; for the mansions of many lairds were, till the late privation of their privileges, the halls of justice to their own tenants.

As these fortifications were the productions of mere necessity, they are built only for safety, with little regard to convenience, and with none to elegance or pleasure. It was sufficient for a laird of the Hebrides, if he had a strong house, in which he could hide his wife and children from the next clan. That they are not large nor splendid is no wonder. It is not easy to find how they were raised, such as they are, by men who had no money, in countries where the labourers and artificers could scarcely be fed. The buildings in different parts of the islands show their degrees of wealth and power. I believe that for all the castles which I have seen beyond the Tweed, the ruins yet remaining of some one of those which the English built in Wales, would supply materials.

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These castles afford another evidence that the fictions of romantick chivalry had for their basis the real manners of the feudal times, when every lord of a seignory lived in his hold, lawless and unaccountable, with all the licentiousness and insolence of uncontested superiority and unprincipled power. The traveller, whoever he might be, coming to the fortified habitation of a chieftain, would, probably, have been interrogated from the battlements, admitted with caution at the gate, introduced to a petty monarch, fierce with habitual hostility, and vigilant with ignorant suspicion; who, according to his general temper, or accidental humour, would have seated a stranger as his guest at the table, or as a spy confined him in the dungeon.

Lochbuy means the yellow lake, which is the name given to an inlet of the sea, upon which the castle of Mr. Maclean stands. The reason of the appellation we did not learn.

We were now to leave the Hebrides, where we had spent some weeks with sufficient amusement, and where we had amplified our thoughts with new scenes of nature, and new modes of life. More time would have given us a more distinct view, but it was necessary that Mr. Boswell should return, before the courts of justice were opened; and it was not proper to live too long upon hospitality, however liberally imparted.

Of these islands it must be confessed, that they have not many allurements, but to the mere lover of naked nature. The inhabitants are thin, provisions are scarce, and desolation and penury give little pleasure.

The people collectively considered are not few, though their numbers are small in proportion to the space which they occupy. Mull is said to contain six thousand, and Sky fifteen thousand. Of the computation respecting Mull, I can give no account; but when I doubted the truth of the numbers attributed to Sky, one of the ministers exhibited such facts as conquered my incredulity.

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Of the proportion which the product of any region bears to the people, an estimate is commonly made according to the pecuniary price of the necessaries of life; a principle of judgment which is never certain, because it supposes, what is far from truth, that the value of money is always the same, and so measures an unknown quantity by an uncertain standard. It is competent enough when the markets of the same country, at different times, and those times not too distant, are to be compared; but of very little use for the purpose of making one nation acquainted with the state of another. Provisions, though plentiful, are sold in places of great pecuniary opulence for nominal prices, to which, however scarce, where gold and silver are yet scarcer, they can never be raised.

In the Western Islands, there is so little internal commerce, that hardly any thing has a known or settled rate. The price of things brought in, or carried out, is to be considered as that of a foreign market; and even this there is some difficulty in discovering, because their denominations of quantity are different from ours; and when there is ignorance on both sides, no appeal can be made to a common measure.

This, however, is not the only impediment. The Scots, with a vigilance of jealousy which never goes to sleep, always suspect than an Englishman despises them for their poverty, and to convince him that they are not less rich than their neighbours, are sure to tell him a price higher than the true. When Lesley, two hundred years ago, related so punctiliously, that a hundred hen eggs, new laid, were sold in the islands for a penny, he supposed that no inference could possibly follow, but that eggs were in great abundance. Posterity has since grown wiser; and having learned, that nominal and real value may differ, they now tell no such stories, lest the foreigner should happen to collect, not that eggs are many, but that pence are few.

Money and wealth have, by the use of commercial language, been so long confounded, that they are commonly

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supposed to be the same; and this prejudice has spread so widely in Scotland, that I know not whether I found man or woman, whom I interrogated concerning payments of money, that could surmount the illiberal desire of deceiving me, by representing every thing as dearer than it is.

From Lochbuy we rode a very few miles to the side of Mull, which faces Scotland, where, having taken leave of our kind protector, sir Allan, we embarked in a boat, in which the seat provided for our accommodation was a heap of rough brushwood; and on the twenty-second of October reposed at a tolerable inn on the mainland.

On the next day we began our journey southwards. The weather was tempestuous. For half the day the ground was rough, and our horses were still small. Had they required much restraint, we might have been reduced to difficulties; for, I think, we had amongst us but one bridle. We fed the poor animals liberally, and they performed their journey well. In the latter part of the day we came to a firm and smooth road, made by the soldiers, on which we travelled with great security, busied with contemplating the scene about us. The night came on while we had yet a great part of the way to go, though not so dark but that we could discern the cataracts which poured down the hills on one side, and fell into one general channel, that ran with great violence on the other. The wind was loud, the rain was heavy, and the whistling of the blast, the fall of the shower, the rush of the cataracts, and the roar of the torrent, made a nobler chorus of the rough musick of nature than it had ever been my chance to hear before. The streams, which ran across the way from the hills to the main current, were so frequent, that after a while I began to count them; and, in ten miles, reckoned fifty-five, probably missing some, and having let some pass before they forced themselves upon my notice. At last we came to Inverary, where we found an inn, not only commodious, but magnificent.

The difficulties of peregrination were now at an end,

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Mr. Boswell had the honour of being known to the duke Argyle, by whom we were very kindly entertained at his splendid seat, and supplied with conveniencies for surveying his spacious park and rising forests.

After two days' stay at Inverary we proceeded southward over Glencroe, a black and dreary region, now made easily passable by a military road, which rises from either end of the glen by an acclivity not dangerously steep, but sufficiently laborious. In the middle, at the top of the hill, is a seat with this inscription, "Rest and be thankful." Stones were placed to mark the distances, which the inhabitants have taken away, resolved, they said, "to have no new miles."

In this rainy season the hills streamed with waterfals, which, crossing the way, formed currents on the other side, that ran in contrary directions as they fell to the north or south of the summit. Being, by the favour of the duke, well mounted, I went up and down the hill with great convenience.

From Glencroe we passed through a pleasant country to the banks of Loch Lomond, and were received at the house of sir James Colquhoun, who is owner of almost all the thirty islands of the loch, which we went in a boat next morning to survey. The heaviness of the rain shortened our voyage, but we landed on one island planted with yew, and stocked with deer, and on another containing, perhaps, not more than half an acre, remarkable for the ruins of an old castle, on which the osprey builds her annual nest. Had Loch Lomond been in a happier climate, it would have been the boast of wealth and vanity to own one of the little spots which it encloses, and to have employed upon it all the arts of embellishment. But as it is, the islets, which court the gazer at a distance, disgust him at his approach, when he finds, instead of soft lawns and shady thickets, nothing more than uncultivated ruggedness.

Where the loch discharges itself into a river called the Leven, we passed a night with Mr. Smollet, a relation of

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doctor Smollet, to whose memory he has raised an obelisk on the bank near the house in which he was born. The civility and respect which we found at every place, it is ungrateful to omit, and tedious to repeat. Here we were met by a post-chaise, that conveyed us to Glasgow.

To describe a city so much frequented as Glasgow, is unnecessary. The prosperity of its commerce appears by the greatness of many private houses, and a general appearance of wealth. It is the only episcopal city whose cathedral was left standing in the rage of reformation. It is now divided into many separate places of worship, which, taken all together, compose a great pile, that had been some centuries in building, but was never finished; for the change of religion intercepted its progress, before the cross aisle was added, which seems essential to a Gothick cathedral.

The college has not had a sufficient share of the increasing magnificence of the place. The session was begun; for it commences on the tenth of October, and continues to the tenth of June, but the students appeared not numerous, being, I suppose, not yet returned from their several houses. The division of the academical year into one session, and one recess, seems to me better accommodated to the present state of life, than that variegation of time by terms and vacations, derived from distant centuries, in which it was probably convenient, and still continued in the English universities. So many solid months as the Scotch scheme of education joins together, allow and encourage a plan for each part of the year; but with us, he that has settled himself to study in the college is soon tempted into the country, and he that has adjusted his life in the country is summoned back to his college.

Yet when I have allowed to the universities of Scotland a more rational distribution of time, I have given them, so far as my inquiries have informed me, all that they can claim. The students, for the most part, go thither boys, and depart before they are men; they carry

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with them little fundamental knowledge, and, therefore, the superstructure cannot be lofty. The grammar schools are not generally well supplied; for the character of a schoolmaster being there less honourable than in England, is seldom accepted by men who are capable to adorn it, and where the school has been deficient, the college can effect little.

Men bred in the universities of Scotland cannot be expected to be often decorated with the splendours of ornamental erudition, but they obtain a mediocrity of knowledge, between learning and ignorance, not inadequate to the purposes of common life, which is, I believe, very widely diffused among them, and which, countenanced in general by a national combination, so invidious, that their friends cannot defend it, and actuated in particulars by a spirit of enterprise, so vigorous, that their enemies are constrained to praise it, enables them to find, or to make their way to employment, riches, and distinction.

From Glasgow we directed our course to Auchinleck, an estate devolved, through a long series of ancestors, to Mr. Boswell's father, the present possessour. In our way we found several places remarkable enough in themselves, but already described by those who viewed them at more leisure, or with much more skill; and stopped two days at Mr. Campbell's, a gentleman married to Mr. Boswell's sister.

Auchinleck, which signifies a *stony field*, seems not now to have any particular claim to its denomination. It is a district generally level, and sufficiently fertile, but, like all the western side of Scotland, incommoded by very frequent rain. It was, with the rest of the country, generally naked, till the present possessour finding, by the growth of some stately trees near his old castle, that the ground was favourable enough to timber, adorned it very diligently with annual plantations.

Lord Auchinleck, who is one of the judges of Scotland, and, therefore, not wholly at leisure for domestick busi-

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ness or pleasure, has yet found time to make improvements in his patrimony. He has built a house of hewn stone, very stately and durable, and has advanced the value of his lands with great tenderness to his tenants.

I was, however, less delighted with the elegance of the modern mansion, than with the sullen dignity of the old castle. I clambered with Mr. Boswell among the ruins, which afford striking images of ancient life. It is, like other castles, built upon a point of rock, and was, I believe, anciently surrounded with a moat. There is another rock near it, to which the drawbridge, when it was let down, is said to have reached. Here, in the ages of tumult and rapine, the laird was surprised and killed by the neighbouring chief, who, perhaps, might have extinguished the family, had he not, in a few days, been seized and hanged, together with his sons, by Douglas, who came with his forces to the relief of Auchinleck.

At no great distance from the house runs a pleasing brook, by a red rock, out of which has been hewn a very agreeable and commodious summer-house, at less expense, as lord Auchinleck told me, than would have been required to build a room of the same dimensions. The rock seems to have no more dampness than any other wall. Such opportunities of variety it is judicious not to neglect.

We now returned to Edinburgh, where I passed some days with men of learning, whose names want no advancement from my commemoration, or with women of elegance, which, perhaps, disclaims a pedant's praise.

The conversation of the Scots grows every day less unpleasing to the English; their peculiarities wear fast away; their dialect is likely to become, in half a century, provincial and rustick, even to themselves. The great, the learned, the ambitious, and the vain, all cultivate the English phrase, and the English pronunciation, and in splendid companies Scotch is not much heard, except now and then from an old lady.

There is one subject of philosophical curiosity to be found in Edinburgh, which no other city has to show; a

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college of the deaf and dumb, who are taught to speak, to read, to write, and to practise arithmetick, by a gentleman, whose name is Braidwood. The number which attends him is, I think, about twelve, which he brings together into a little school, and instructs according to their several degrees of proficiency.

I do not mean to mention the instruction of the deaf as new. Having been first practised upon the son of a constable of Spain, it was afterwards cultivated with much emulation in England, by Wallis and Holder, and was lately professed by Mr. Baker, who once flattered me with hopes of seeing his method published. How far any former teachers have succeeded, it is not easy to know; the improvement of Mr. Braidwood's pupils is wonderful. They not only speak, write, and understand what is written, but if he that speaks looks towards them, and modifies his organs by distinct and full utterance, they know so well what is spoken, that it is an expression scarcely figurative to say they hear with the eye. That any have attained to the power mentioned by Burnet, of feeling sounds, by laying a hand on the speaker's mouth, I know not; but I have seen so much, that I can believe more; a single word, or a short sentence, I think, may possibly be so distinguished.

It will be readily supposed by those that consider this subject, that Mr. Braidwood's scholars spell accurately. Orthography is vitiated among such as learn first to speak, and then to write, by imperfect notions of the relation between letters and vocal utterance; but to those students every character is of equal importance; for letters are to them not symbols of names, but of things; when they write, they do not represent a sound, but delineate a form.

This school I visited, and found some of the scholars waiting for their master, whom they are said to receive, at his entrance, with smiling countenances and sparkling eyes, delighted with the hope of new ideas. One of the young ladies had her slate before her, on which I wrote

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a question consisting of three figures, to be multiplied by two figures. She looked upon it, and quivering her fingers in a manner which I thought very pretty, but of which I knew not whether it was art or play, multiplied the sum regularly in two lines, observing the decimal place; but did not add the two lines together, probably disdaining so easy an operation. I pointed at the place where the sum total should stand, and she noted it with such expedition as seemed to show that she had it only to write.

It was pleasing to see one of the most desperate of human calamities capable of so much help: whatever enlarges hope, will exalt courage; after having seen the deaf taught arithmetick, who would be afraid to cultivate the Hebrides?

Such are the things which this journey has given me an opportunity of seeing, and such are the reflections which that sight has raised. Having passed my time almost wholly in cities, I may have been surprised by modes of life and appearances of nature, that are familiar to men of wider survey and more varied conversation. Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal, and I cannot but be conscious that my thoughts on national manners, are the thoughts of one who has seen but little.

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THE

VISION OF THEODORE,

THE HERMIT OF TENERIFFE:

FOUND IN HIS CELL.*

SON of Perseverance, whoever thou art, whose curiosity has led thee hither, read and be wise. He that now calls upon thee is Theodore, the Hermit of Teneriffe, who, in the fifty-seventh year of his retreat, left this instruction to mankind, lest his solitary hours should be spent in vain.

I was once what thou art now, a groveller on the earth, and a gazer at the sky; I trafficked and heaped wealth together; I love and was favoured, I wore the robe of honour and heard the musick of adulation; I was ambitious, and rose to greatness; I was unhappy, and retired. I sought for some time what I at length found here, a place where all real wants might be easily supplied, and where I might not be under the necessity of purchasing the assistance of men, by the toleration of their follies. Here I saw fruits, and herbs, and water, and here determined to wait the hand of death, which I hope, when at last it comes, will fall lightly upon me.

Forty-eight years had I now passed in forgetfulness of all mortal cares, and without any inclination to wander farther than the necessity of procuring sustenance re-

* Printed in the Preceptor, 1748.

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quired; but as I stood one day beholding the rock that overhangs my cell, I found in myself a desire to climb it; and when I was on its top, was, in the same manner, determined to scale the next, till, by degrees, I conceived a wish to view the summit of the mountain, at the foot of which I had so long resided. This motion of my thoughts I endeavoured to suppress, not because it appeared criminal, but because it was new; and all change not evidently for the better, alarms a mind taught by experience to distrust itself. I was often afraid that my heart was deceiving me, that my impatience of confinement arose from some earthly passion, and that my ardour to survey the works of nature, was only a hidden longing to mingle once again in the scenes of life. I, therefore, endeavoured to settle my thoughts into their former state, but found their distraction every day greater. I was always reproaching myself with the want of happiness within my reach, and at last began to question whether it was not laziness rather than caution that restrained me from climbing to the summit of Teneriffe.

I rose, therefore, before the day, and began my journey up the steep of the mountain; but I had not advanced far, old as I was and burdened with provisions, when the day began to shine upon me; the declivities grew more precipitous, and the sand slided from beneath my feet: at last, fainting with labour, I arrived at a small plain almost enclosed by rocks, and open only to the east. I sat down to rest awhile, in full persuasion, that, when I had recovered my strength, I should proceed on my design; but when once I had tasted ease, I found many reasons against disturbing it. The branches spread a shade over my head, and the gales of spring wafted odours to my bosom.

As I sat thus, forming alternately excuses for delay, and resolutions to go forward, an irresistible heaviness suddenly surprised me; I laid my head upon the bank, and resigned myself to sleep; when methought I heard the sound as of the flight of eagles, and a being of more than

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human dignity stood before me. While I was deliberating how to address him, he took me by the hand with an air of kindness, and asked me solemnly, but without severity, "Theodore, whither art thou going?" "I am climbing," answered I, "to the top of the mountain, to enjoy a more extensive prospect of the works of nature." "Attend first," said he, "to the prospect which this place affords, and what thou dost not understand I will explain. I am one of the benevolent beings who watch over the children of the dust, to preserve them from those evils which will not ultimately terminate in good, and which they do not, by their own faults, bring upon themselves. Look round, therefore, without fear: observe, contemplate, and be instructed."

Encouraged by this assurance, I looked and beheld a mountain higher than Teneriffe, to the summit of which the human eye could never reach: when I had tired myself with gazing upon its height, I turned my eyes towards its foot, which I could easily discover, but was amazed to find it without foundation, and placed inconceivably in emptiness and darkness. Thus I stood terrified and confused; above were tracts inscrutable, and below was total vacuity. But my protector, with a voice of admonition, cried out, "Theodore, be not affrighted, but raise thy eyes again; the mountain of Existence is before thee, survey it and be wise."

I then looked with more deliberate attention, and observed the bottom of the mountain to be of gentle rise, and overspread with flowers; the middle to be more steep, embarrassed with crags, and interrupted by precipices, over which hung branches loaded with fruits, and among which were scattered palaces and bowers. The tracts which my eye could reach nearest the top were generally barren; but there were among the clefts of the rocks a few hardy evergreens, which, though they did not give much pleasure to the sight or smell, yet seemed to cheer the labour, and facilitate the steps of those who were clambering among them.

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Then, beginning to examine more minutely the different parts, I observed, at a great distance, a multitude of both sexes issuing into view from the bottom of the mountain. Their first actions I could not accurately discern; but, as they every moment approached nearer, I found that they amused themselves with gathering flowers under the superintendence of a modest virgin in a white robe, who seemed not over solicitous to confine them to any settled pace or certain track; for she knew that the whole ground was smooth and solid, and that they could not easily be hurt or bewildered. When, as it often happened, they plucked a thistle for a flower, Innocence, so was she called, would smile at the mistake. Happy, said I, are they who are under so gentle a government, and yet are safe. But I had no opportunity to dwell long on the consideration of their felicity; for I found that Innocence continued her attendance but a little way, and seemed to consider only the flowery bottom of the mountain as her proper province. Those whom she abandoned scarcely knew that they were left, before they perceived themselves in the hands of Education, a nymph more severe in her aspect, and imperious in her commands, who confined them to certain paths, in their opinion too narrow and too rough. These they were continually solicited to leave by Appetite, whom Education could never fright away, though she sometimes awed her to such timidity, that the effects of her presence were scarcely perceptible. Some went back to the first part of the mountain, and seemed desirous of continuing busied in plucking flowers, but were no longer guarded by Innocence; and such as Education could not force back, proceeded up the mountain by some miry road, in which they were seldom seen, and scarcely ever regarded.

As Education led her troop up the mountain, nothing was more observable than that she was frequently giving them cautions to beware of Habits; and was calling out to one or another, at every step, that a Habit was ensnaring them; that they would be under the dominion of

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Habit before they perceived their danger; and that those whom Habit should once subdue, had little hope of regaining their liberty.

Of this caution, so frequently repeated, I was very solicitous to know the reason, when my protector directed my regard to a troop of pygmies, which appeared to walk silently before those that where climbing the mountain, and each to smooth the way before her follower. I found that I had missed the notice of them before, both because they were so minute as not easily to be discerned, and because they grew every moment nearer in their colour to the objects, with which they were surrounded. As the followers of Education did not appear to be sensible of the presence of these dangerous associates, or, ridiculing their diminutive size, did not think it possible that human beings should ever be brought into subjection by such feeble enemies, they generally heard her precepts of vigilance with wonder: and, when they thought her eye withdrawn, treated them with contempt. Nor could I myself think her cautions so necessary as her frequent inculcations seemed to suppose, till I observed that each of these petty beings held secretly a chain in her hand, with which she prepared to bind those whom she found within her power. Yet these Habits under the eye of Education went quietly forward, and seemed very little to increase in bulk or strength; for though they were always willing to join with Appetite, yet when Education kept them apart from her, they would very punctually obey command, and make the narrow roads in which they were confined easier and smoother.

It was observable, that their stature was never at a stand, but continually growing or decreasing, yet not always in the same proportions: nor could I forbear to express my admiration, when I saw in how much less time they generally gained than lost bulk. Though they grew slowly in the road of Education, it might, however, be perceived that they grew; but if they once deviated at the call of Appetite, their stature soon became gigantick;

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and their strength was such, that Education pointed out to her tribe many that were led in chains by them, whom she could never more rescue from their slavery. She pointed them out, but with little effect; for all her pupils appeared confident of their own superiority to the strongest Habit, and some seemed in secret to regret, that they were hindered from following the triumph of Appetite.

It was the peculiar artifice of Habit, not to suffer her power to be felt at first. Those whom she led, she had the address of appearing only to attend, but was continually doubling her chains upon her companions; which were so slender in themselves, and so silently fastened, that while the attention was engaged by other objects, they were not easily perceived. Each link grew tighter as it had been longer worn; and when, by continual additions, they became so heavy as to be felt, they were very frequently too strong to be broken.

When Education had proceeded in this manner to the part of the mountain where the declivity began to grow craggy, she resigned her charge to two powers of superiour aspect. The meaner of them appeared capable of presiding in senates, or governing nations, and yet watched the steps of the other with the most anxious attention, and was visibly confounded and perplexed, if ever she suffered her regard to be drawn away. The other seemed to approve her submission as pleasing, but with such a condescension as plainly showed that she claimed it as due; and indeed, so great was her dignity and sweetness, that he who would not reverence, must not behold her.

"Theodore," said my protector, "be fearless, and be wise; approach these powers, whose dominion extends to all the remaining part of the mountain of Existence." I trembled, and ventured to address the inferiour nymph, whose eyes, though piercing and awful, I was not able to sustain. "Bright power," said I, "by whatever name it is lawful to address thee, tell me, thou who presidest here, on what condition thy protection will be granted?" "It will be granted," said she, "only to obedience. I am

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Reason, of all subordinate beings the noblest and the greatest; who, if thou wilt receive my laws, will reward thee, like the rest of my votaries, by conducting thee to Religion." Charmed by her voice and aspect, I professed my readiness to follow her. She then presented me to her mistress, who looked upon me with tenderness. I bowed before her, and she smiled.

When Education delivered up those for whose happiness she had been so long solicitous, she seemed to expect that they should express some gratitude for her care, or some regret at the loss of that protection which she had hitherto afforded them. But it was easy to discover, by the alacrity which broke out at her departure, that her presence had been long displeasing, and that she had been teaching those, who felt in themselves no want of instruction. They all agreed in rejoicing that they should no longer be subject to her caprices, or disturbed by her documents, but should be now under the direction only of Reason, to whom they made no doubt of being able to recommend themselves, by a steady adherence to all her precepts. Reason counselled them, at their first entrance upon her province, to enlist themselves among the votaries of Religion; and informed them, that if they trusted to her alone, they would find the same fate with her other admirers, whom she had not been able to secure against Appetites and Passions, and who, having been seized by Habits in the regions of Desire, had been dragged away to the caverns of Despair. Her admonition was vain, the greater number declared against any other direction, and doubted not, but by her superintendency, they should climb with safety up the mountain of Existence. "My power," said Reason, "is to advise, not to compel; I have already told you the danger of your choice. The path seems now plain and even, but there are asperities and pitfals, over which Religion only can conduct you. Look upwards, and you perceive a mist before you, settled upon the highest visible part of the mountain; a mist by which my prospect is terminated, and which is pierced only by the eyes of Re-

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ligion. Beyond it are the temples of Happiness, in which those who climb the precipice by her direction, after the toil of their pilgrimage, repose for ever. I know not the way, and, therefore, can only conduct you to a better guide. Pride has sometimes reproached me with the narrowness of my view, but, when she endeavoured to extend it, could only show me, below the mist, the bowers of Content; even they vanished, as I fixed my eyes upon them; and those whom she persuaded to travel towards them, were enchained by Habits, and ingulfed by Despair, a cruel tyrant, whose caverns are beyond the darkness on the right side and on the left, from whose prisons none can escape, and whom I cannot teach you to avoid."

Such was the declaration of Reason to those who demanded her protection. Some that recollected the dictates of Education, finding them now seconded by another authority, submitted with reluctance to the strict decree, and engaged themselves among the followers of Religion, who were distinguished by the uniformity of their march, though many of them were women, and by their continual endeavours to move upwards, without appearing to regard the prospects which, at every step, courted their attention.

All those who determined to follow either Reason or Religion, were continually importuned to forsake the road, sometimes by Passions, and sometimes by Appetites, of whom both had reason to boast the success of their artifices; for so many were drawn into by-paths, that any way was more populous than the right. The attacks of the Appetites were more impetuous; those of the Passions longer continued. The Appetites turned their followers directly from the true way; but the Passions marched at first in a path nearly in the same direction with that of Reason and Religion, but deviated by slow degrees, till at last they entirely changed their course. Appetite drew aside the dull, and Passion the sprightly. Of the Appetites, Lust was the strongest; and of the Passions, Vanity. The most powerful assault was to be feared, when a Passion and an Appetite joined their enticements; and the path of Reason

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was best followed, when a Passion called to one side, and an Appetite to the other.

These seducers had the greatest success upon the followers of Reason, over whom they scarcely ever failed to prevail, except when they counteracted one another. They had not the same triumphs over the votaries of Religion; for though they were often led aside for a time, Religion commonly recalled them by her emissary Conscience, before Habit had time to enchain them. But they that professed to obey Reason, if once they forsook her, seldom returned; for she had no messenger to summon them but Pride, who generally betrayed her confidence, and employed all her skill to support Passion; and if ever she did her duty, was found unable to prevail, if Habit had interposed.

I soon found that the great danger to the followers of Religion was only from Habit; every other power was easily resisted, nor did they find any difficulty, when they inadvertently quitted her, to find her again by the direction of Conscience, unless they had given time to Habit to draw her chain behind them, and bar up the way by which they had wandered. Of some of those, the condition was justly to be pitied, who turned at every call of Conscience, and tried, but without effect, to burst the chains of Habit; saw Religion walking forward at a distance, saw her with reverence, and longed to join her; but were, whenever they approached her, withheld by Habit, and languished in sordid bondage, which they could not escape, though they scorned and hated it.

It was evident, that the Habits were so far from growing weaker by these repeated contests, that, if they were not totally overcome, every struggle enlarged their bulk, and increased their strength; and a Habit opposed and victorious, was more than twice as strong as before the contest. The manner in which those who were weary of their tyranny, endeavoured to escape from them, appeared by the event, to be generally wrong; they tried to loose their chains one by one, and to retreat by the same degrees as they advanced; but before the deliverance was com-

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pleted, Habit always threw new chains upon her fugitive; nor did any escape her but those, who, by an effort sudden and violent, burst their shackles at once, and left her at a distance; and even of these, many rushing too precipitately forward, and hindered by their terrours from stopping where they were safe, were fatigued with their own vehemence, and resigned themselves again to that power from whom an escape must be so dearly bought, and whose tyranny was little felt, except when it was resisted.

Some, however, there always were, who, when they found Habit prevailing over them, called upon Reason or Religion for assistance; each of them willingly came to the succour of her suppliant, but neither with the same strength, nor the same success. Habit, insolent with her power, would often presume to parley with Reason, and offer to loose some of her chains, if the rest might remain. To this, Reason, who was never certain of victory, frequently consented, but always found her concession destructive, and saw the captive led away by Habit to his former slavery. Religion never submitted to treaty, but held out her hand with certainty of conquest; and if the captive to whom she gave it did not quit his hold, always led him away in triumph, and placed him in the direct path to the Temple of Happiness, where Reason never failed to congratulate his deliverance, and encourage his adherence to that power to whose timely succour he was indebted for it.

When the traveller was again placed in the road of Happiness, I saw Habit again gliding before him, but reduced to the stature of a dwarf, without strength and without activity; but when the Passions or Appetites, which had before seduced him, made their approach, Habit would on a sudden start into size, and with unexpected violence push him towards them. The wretch, thus impelled on one side, and allured on the other, too frequently quitted the road of Happiness, to which, after his second deviation from it, he rarely returned: but, by a timely call upon Religion, the force of Habit was eluded,

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her attacks grew fainter, and at last her correspondence with the enemy was entirely destroyed. She then began to employ those restless faculties in compliance with the power which she could not overcome; and as she grew again in stature and in strength, cleared away the asperities of the road to Happiness.

From this road I could not easily withdraw my attention, because all who travelled it appeared cheerful and satisfied; and the farther they proceeded, the greater appeared their alacrity, and the stronger their conviction of the wisdom of their guide. Some who had never deviated but by short excursions, had Habit in the middle of their passage vigorously supporting them, and driving off their Appetites and Passions which attempted to interrupt their progress. Others, who had entered this road late, or had long forsaken it, were toiling on without her help at least, and commonly against her endeavours. But I observed, when they approached to the barren top, that few were able to proceed without some support from Habit: and that they, whose Habits were strong, advanced towards the mists with little emotion, and entered them at last with calmness and confidence; after which, they were seen only by the eye of Religion; and though Reason looked after them with the most earnest curiosity, she could only obtain a faint glimpse, when her mistress, to enlarge her prospect, raised her from the ground. Reason, however, discerned that they were safe, but Religion saw that they were happy.

"Now, Theodore," said my protector, "withdraw thy view from the regions of obscurity, and see the fate of those who, when they were dismissed by Education, would admit no direction but that of Reason. Survey their wanderings, and be wise."

I looked then upon the road of Reason, which was, indeed, so far as it reached, the same with that of Religion, nor had Reason discovered it but by her instruction. Yet when she had once been taught it, she clearly saw that it was right; and Pride had sometimes incited her to declare

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that she discovered it herself, and persuaded her to offer herself as a guide to Religion, whom, after many vain experiments, she found it her highest privilege to follow. Reason was, however, at last well instructed in part of the way, and appeared to teach it with some success, when her precepts were not misrepresented by Passion, or her influence overborne by Appetite. But neither of these enemies was she able to resist. When Passion seized upon her votaries, she seldom attempted opposition: she seemed, indeed, to contend with more vigour against Appetite, but was generally overwearied in the contest; and if either of her opponents had confederated with Habit, her authority was wholly at an end. When Habit endeavoured to captivate the votaries of Religion, she grew by slow degrees, and gave time to escape; but in seizing the unhappy followers of Reason, she proceeded as one that had nothing to fear, and enlarged her size, and doubled her chains without intermission, and without reserve.

Of those who forsook the directions of Reason, some were led aside by the whispers of Ambition, who was perpetually pointing to stately palaces, situated on eminences on either side, recounting the delights of affluence, and boasting the security of power. They were easily persuaded to follow her, and Habit quickly threw her chains upon them; they were soon convinced of the folly of their choice, but few of them attempted to return. Ambition led them forward from precipice to precipice, where many fell and were seen no more. Those that escaped were, after a long series of hazards, generally delivered over to Avarice, and enlisted by her into the service of Tyranny, where they continued to heap up gold till their patrons or their heirs pushed them headlong at last into the caverns of Despair.

Others were enticed by Intemperance to ramble in search of those fruits which hung over the rocks, and filled the air with their fragrance. I observed, that the Habits which hovered about these soon grew to an enormous size, nor were there any who less attempted to return to Rea-

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son, or sooner sunk into the gulfs that lay before them. When these first quitted the road, Reason looked after them with a frown of contempt, but had little expectations of being able to reclaim them; for the bowl of intoxication was of such qualities as to make them lose all regard but for the present moment; neither Hope nor Fear could enter their retreats; and Habit had so absolute a power, that even Conscience, if Religion had employed her in their favour, would not have been able to force an entrance.

There were others whose crime it was rather to neglect Reason than to disobey her; and who retreated from the heat and tumult of the way, not to the bowers of Intemperance, but to the maze of Indolence. They had this peculiarity in their condition, that they were always in sight of the road of Reason, always wishing for her presence, and always resolving to return to-morrow. In these was most eminently conspicuous the subtlety of Habit, who hung imperceptible shackles upon them, and was every moment leading them farther from the road, which they always imagined that they had the power of reaching. They wandered on from one double of the labyrinth to another with the chains of Habit hanging secretly upon them, till, as they advanced, the flowers grew paler, and the scents fainter; they proceeded in their dreary march without pleasure in their progress, yet without power to return; and had this aggravation above all others, that they were criminal but not delighted. The drunkard for a time laughed over his wine; the ambitious man triumphed in the miscarriage of his rival; but the captives of Indolence had neither superiority nor merriment. Discontent lowered in their looks, and sadness hovered round their shades; yet they crawled on reluctant and gloomy, till they arrived at the depth of the recess, varied only with poppies and nightshade, where the dominion of Indolence terminates, and the hopeless wanderer is delivered up to Melancholy; the chains of Habit are rivetted for ever; and Melancholy, having tortured her

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prisoner for a time, consigns him at last to the cruelty of Despair.

While I was musing on this miserable scene, my protector called out to me, "Remember, Theodore, and be wise, and let not Habit prevail against thee." I started and beheld myself surrounded by the rocks of Teneriffe: the birds of light were singing in the trees, and the glances of the morning darted upon me.

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THE FOUNTAINS:

A FAIRY TALE.*

Felix qui potuit boni
Fontem visere lucidum. BOETHIUS.

As Floretta was wandering in a meadow at the foot of Plinlimmon, she heard a little bird cry in such a note as she had never observed before, and looking round her, saw a lovely goldfinch entangled by a lime-twig, and a hawk hovering over him, as at the point of seizing him in his talons.

Floretta longed to rescue the little bird, but was afraid to encounter the hawk, who looked fiercely upon her without any apparent dread of her approach, and as she advanced seemed to increase in bulk, and clapped his wings in token of defiance. Floretta stood deliberating a few moments, but, seeing her mother at no great distance, took courage, and snatched the twig with the little bird upon it. When she had disengaged him, she put him in her bosom, and the hawk flew away.

Floretta, showing her bird to her mother, told her from what danger she had rescued him; her mother, after admiring his beauty, said, that he would be a very proper inhabitant of the little gilded cage, which had hung empty,

* From Miscellanies in Prose and Verse. By Anna Williams. 1766, 4to.

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since the starling died for want of water, and that he should be placed at the chamber window, for it would be wonderfully pleasant to hear him in the morning.

Floretta, with tears in her eyes, replied that he had better have been devoured by the hawk than die for want of water, and that she would not save him from a less evil to put him in danger of a greater: she, therefore, took him into her hand, cleaned his feathers from the birdlime, looked upon him with great tenderness, and, having put his bill to her lips, dismissed him into the air.

He flew in circles round her as she went home, and, perching on a tree before the door, delighted them awhile with such sweetness of song, that her mother reproved her for not putting him in the cage. Floretta endeavoured to look grave, but silently approved her own act, and wished her mother more generosity. Her mother guessed her thoughts, and told her, that when she was older she would be wiser.

Floretta, however, did not repent, but hoped to hear her little bird the next morning singing at liberty. She waked early and listened, but no goldfinch could she hear. She rose, and walking again in the same meadow, went to view the bush where she had seen the lime twig the day before.

When she entered the thicket, and was near the place for which she was looking, from behind a blossoming hawthorn advanced a female form of very low stature, but of elegant proportion and majestick air, arrayed in all the colours of the meadow, and sparkling as she moved like a dew-drop in the sun.

Floretta was too much disordered to speak or fly, and stood motionless between fear and pleasure, when the little lady took her by the hand.

"I am," said she, "one of that order of beings which some call Fairies, and some Piskies: we have always been known to inhabit the crags and caverns of Plinlimmon. The maids and shepherds when they wander by moonlight,

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have often heard our musick, and sometimes seen our dances.

"I am the chief of the fairies of this region, and am known among them by the name of lady Lilinet of the Blue Rock. As I lived always in my own mountain, I had very little knowledge of human manners, and thought better of mankind than other fairies found them to deserve; I, therefore, often opposed the mischievous practices of my sisters, without always inquiring whether they were just. I extinguished the light that was kindled to lead a traveller into a marsh, and found afterwards that he was hasting to corrupt a virgin: I dissipated a mist which assumed the form of a town, and was raised to decoy a monopolizer of corn from his way to the next market: I removed a thorn, artfully planted to prick the foot of a churl, that was going to hinder the poor from following his reapers; and defeated so many schemes of obstruction and punishment, that I was cited before the queen as one who favoured wickedness, and opposed the execution of fairy justice.

"Having never been accustomed to suffer control, and thinking myself disgraced by the necessity of defence, I so much irritated the queen by my sullenness and petulance, that in her anger she transformed me into a goldfinch. 'In this form,' says she, 'I doom thee to remain till some human being shall show thee kindness without any prospect of interest.'

"I flew out of her presence not much dejected; for I did not doubt but every reasonable being must love that which, having never offended, could not be hated, and having no power to hurt, could not be feared.

"I, therefore, fluttered about the villages, and endeavoured to force myself into notice.

"Having heard that nature was least corrupted among those who had no acquaintance with elegance and splendour, I employed myself for five years in hopping before the doors of cottages, and often sat singing on the thatched roof: my motions were seldom seen, or my notes heard,

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no kindness was ever excited, and all the reward of officiousness was to be aimed at with a stone when I stood within a throw.

"The stones never hurt me, for I had still the power of a fairy.

"I then betook myself to spacious and magnificent habitations, and sung in bowers by the walks or on the banks of fountains.

"In these places, where novelty was recommended by satiety, and curiosity excited by leisure, my form and my voice were soon distinguished, and I was known by the name of the pretty goldfinch; the inhabitants would walk out to listen to my musick, and at last it was their practice to court my visits by scattering meat in my common haunts.

"This was repeated till I went about pecking in full security, and expected to regain my original form, when I observed two of my most liberal benefactors silently advancing with a net behind me. I flew off, and fluttering beside them pricked the leg of each, and left them halting and groaning with the cramp.

"I then went to another house, where, for two springs and summers I entertained a splendid family with such melody as they had never heard in the woods before. The winter that followed the second summer was remarkably cold, and many little birds perished in the field. I laid myself in the way of one of the ladies, as benumbed with cold and faint with hunger; she picked me up with great joy, telling her companions that she had found the goldfinch that sung so finely all the summer in the myrtle hedge, that she would lay him where he should die, for she could not bear to kill him, and would then pick his fine feathers very carefully, and stick them in her muff.

"Finding that her fondness and her gratitude could give way to so slight an interest, I chilled her fingers that she could not hold me, then flew at her face, and with my beak gave her nose four pecks, that left four black spots indelible behind them, and broke a match, by which

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she would have obtained the finest equipage in the country.

"At length the queen repented of her sentence, and being unable to revoke it, assisted me to try experiments upon man, to excite his tenderness, and attract his regard.

"We made many attempts, in which we were always disappointed. At last she placed me in your way held by a lime-twig, and herself, in the shape of a hawk, made the show of devouring me. You, my dear, have rescued me from the seeming danger without desiring to detain me in captivity, or seeking any other recompense than the pleasure of benefiting a feeling creature.

"The queen is so much pleased with your kindness, that I am come by her permission, to reward you with a greater favour than ever fairy bestowed before.

"The former gifts of fairies, though bounties in design, have proved commonly mischiefs in the event. We have granted mortals to wish according to their own discretion, and their discretion being small, and their wishes irreversible, they have rashly petitioned for their own destruction. But you, my dearest Floretta, shall have, what none have ever before obtained from us, the power of indulging your wish, and the liberty of retracting it. Be bold, and follow me."

Floretta was easily persuaded to accompany the fairy, who led her through a labyrinth of crags and shrubs, to a cavern covered by a thicket on the side of the mountain.

"This cavern," said she, "is the court of Lilinet your friend; in this place you shall find a certain remedy for all real evils." Lilinet then went before her through a long subterraneous passage, where she saw many beautiful fairies, who came to gaze at the stranger, but who, from reverence to their mistress, gave her no disturbance. She heard from remote corners of the gloomy cavern the roar of winds and the fall of waters, and more than once entreated to return; but Lilinet, assuring her that she

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was safe, persuaded her to proceed till they came to an arch, into which the light found its way through a fissure of the rock.

There Lilinet seated herself and her guest upon a bench of agate, and pointing to two fountains that bubbled before them, said: "Now attend, my dear Floretta, and enjoy the gratitude of a fairy. Observe the two fountains that spring up in the middle of the vault, one into a basin of alabaster, and the other into a basin of dark flint. The one is called the spring of joy, the other of sorrow; they rise from distant veins in the rock, and burst out in two places, but after a short course unite their streams, and run ever after in one mingled current.

"By drinking of these fountains, which, though shut up from all other human beings, shall be always accessible to you, it will be in your power to regulate your future life.

"When you are drinking the water of joy from the alabaster fountain, you may form your wish, and it shall be granted. As you raise your wish higher, the water will be sweeter and sweeter to the taste; but beware that you are not tempted by its increasing sweetness to repeat your draughts, for the ill effects of your wish can only be removed by drinking the spring of sorrow from the basin of flint, which will be bitter, in the same proportion as the water of joy was sweet. Now, my Floretta, make the experiment, and give me the first proof of moderate desires. Take the golden cup that stands on the margin of the spring of joy, form your wish, and drink."

Floretta wanted no time to deliberate on the subject of her wish; her first desire was the increase of her beauty. She had some disproportion of features. She took the cup, and wished to be agreeable; the water was sweet, and she drank copiously; and in the fountain, which was clearer than crystal, she saw that her face was completely regular.

She then filled the cup again, and wished for a rosy bloom upon her cheeks: the water was sweeter than before, and the colour of her cheeks was heightened.

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She next wished for a sparkling eye: the water grew yet more pleasant, and her glances were like the beams of the sun.

She could not yet stop; she drank again, desired to be made a perfect beauty, and a perfect beauty she became.

She had now whatever her heart could wish; and making an humble reverence to Lilinet, requested to be restored to her own habitation. They went back, and the fairies in the way wondered at the change of Floretta's form. She came home delighted to her mother, who, on seeing the improvement, was yet more delighted than herself.

Her mother from that time pushed her forward into publick view: Floretta was at all the resorts of idleness and assemblies of pleasure; she was fatigued with balls, she was cloyed with treats, she was exhausted by the necessity of returning compliments. This life delighted her awhile, but custom soon destroyed its pleasure. She found that the men who courted her to day, resigned her on the morrow to other flatterers, and that the women attacked her reputation by whispers and calumnies, till, without knowing how she had offended, she was shunned as infamous.

She knew that her reputation was destroyed by the envy of her beauty, and resolved to degrade herself from the dangerous preeminence. She went to the bush where she rescued the bird, and called for lady Lilinet. Immediately Lilinet appeared, and discovered by Floretta's dejected look, that she had drunk too much from the alabaster fountain.

"Follow me," she cried, "my Floretta, and be wiser for the future."

They went to the fountains, and Floretta began to taste of the waters of sorrow, which were so bitter that she withdrew more than once the cup from her mouth: at last she resolutely drank away the perfection of beauty, the sparkling eye, and rosy bloom, and left herself only agreeable.

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She lived for some time with great content; but content is seldom lasting. She had a desire, in a short time, again to taste the waters of joy: she called for the conduct of Lilinet, and was led to the alabaster fountain, where she drank, and wished for a faithful lover.

After her return she was soon addressed by a young man, whom she thought worthy of her affection. He courted, and flattered, and promised; till at last she yielded up her heart. He then applied to her parents; and, finding her fortune less than he expected, contrived a quarrel, and deserted her.

Exasperated by her disappointment, she went in quest of Lilinet, and expostulated with her for the deceit which she had practised. Lilinet asked her, with a smile, for what she had been wishing; and being told, made her this reply. "You are not, my dear, to wonder or complain: you may wish for yourself, but your wishes can have no effect upon another. You may become lovely by the efficacy of the fountain, but that you shall be loved is by no means a certain consequence; for you cannot confer upon another either discernment or fidelity; that happiness which you must derive from others, it is not in my power to regulate or bestow."

Floretta was, for some time, so dejected by this limitation of the fountain's power, that she thought it unworthy of another visit; but, being on some occasion thwarted by her mother's authority, she went to Lilinet, and drank at the alabaster fountain for a spirit to do her own way.

Lilinet saw that she drank immoderately, and admonished her of her danger; but *spirit* and *her own way* gave such sweetness to the water, that she could not prevail upon herself to forbear, till Lilinet, in pure compassion, snatched the cup out of her hand.

When she came home every thought was contempt, and every action was rebellion: she had drunk into herself a spirit to resist, but could not give her mother a disposition to yield; the old lady asserted her right to

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govern; and, though she was often foiled by the impetuosity of her daughter, she supplied by pertinacity what she wanted in violence; so that the house was in a continual tumult by the pranks of the daughter and opposition of the mother.

In time, Floretta was convinced that spirit had only made her a capricious termagant, and that her own ways ended in errour, perplexity, and disgrace; she perceived that the vehemence of mind, which to a man may sometimes procure awe and obedience, produce to a woman nothing but detestation; she, therefore, went back, and by a large draught from the flinty fountain, though the water was very bitter, replaced herself under her mother's care, and quitted her spirit and her own way.

Floretta's fortune was moderate, and her desires were not larger, till her mother took her to spend a summer at one of the places which wealth and idleness frequent, under pretence of drinking the waters. She was now no longer a perfect beauty, and, therefore, conversation in her presence took its course as in other company, opinions were freely told, and observations made without reserve. Here Floretta first learned the importance of money. When she saw a woman of mean air and empty talk draw the attention of the place, she always discovered upon inquiry that she had so many thousands to her fortune.

She soon perceived that where these golden goddesses appeared, neither birth nor elegance, nor civility had any power of attraction, and every art of entertainment was devoted to them, and that the great and the wise courted their regard.

The desire after wealth was raised yet higher by her mother, who was always telling her how much neglect she suffered for want of fortune, and what distinctions, if she had but a fortune, her good qualities would obtain. Her narrative of the day was always, that Floretta walked in the morning, but was not spoken to because she had a small fortune, and that Floretta danced at the ball bet-

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ter than any of them, but nobody minded her for want of a fortune.

This want, in which all other wants appeared to be included, Floretta was resolved to endure no longer, and came home flattering her imagination in secret with the riches which she was now about to obtain.

On the day after her return she walked out alone to meet lady Lilinet, and went with her to the fountain: riches did not taste so sweet as either beauty or spirit, and, therefore, she was not immoderate in her draught.

When they returned from the cavern, Lilinet gave her wand to a fairy that attended her, with an order to conduct Floretta to the Black Rock.

The way was not long, and they soon came to the mouth of a mine in which there was a hidden treasure, guarded by an earthy fairy deformed and shaggy, who opposed the entrance of Floretta till he recognised the wand of the lady of the mountain. Here Floretta saw vast heaps of gold, and silver, and gems, gathered and reposited in former ages, and entrusted to the guard of the fairies of the earth. The little fairy delivered the orders of her mistress, and the surly sentinel promised to obey them.

Floretta, wearied with her walk, and pleased with her success, went home to rest, and when she waked in the morning, first opened her eyes upon a cabinet of jewels, and looking into her drawers and boxes, found them filled with gold.

Floretta was now as fine as the finest. She was the first to adopt any expensive fashion, to subscribe to any pompous entertainment, to encourage any foreign artist, or engage in any frolick of which the cost was to make the pleasure.

She was, on a sudden, the favourite of every place. Report made her wealth thrice greater than it really was, and wherever she came, all was attention, reverence and obedience. The ladies who had formerly slighted her, or by whom she had been formerly carassed, gratified her

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pride by open flattery and private murmurs. She sometimes overheard them railing at upstarts, and wondering whence some people came, or how their expenses were supplied. This incited her to heighten the splendour of her dress, to increase the number of her retinue, and to make such propositions of costly schemes, that her rivals were forced to desist from the contest.

But she now began to find that the tricks which can be played with money will seldom bear to be repeated, that admiration is a short-lived passion, and that the pleasure of expense is gone when wonder and envy are no more excited. She found that respect was an empty form, and that all those who crowded round her were drawn to her by vanity or interest.

It was, however, pleasant to be able, on any terms, to elevate and to mortify, to raise hopes and fears: and she would still have continued to be rich, had not the ambition of her mother contrived to marry her to a lord, whom she despised as ignorant, and abhorred as profligate. Her mother persisted in her importunity; and Floretta having now lost the spirit of resistance, had no other refuge than to divest herself of her fairy fortune.

She implored the assistance of Lilinet, who praised her resolution. She drank cheerfully from the flinty fountain, and found the waters not extremely bitter. When she returned she went to bed, and in the morning perceived that all her riches had been conveyed away she knew not how, except a few ornamental jewels, which Lilinet had ordered to be carried back, as a reward for her dignity of mind.

She was now almost weary of visiting the fountain, and solaced herself with such amusements as every day happened to produce: at last there arose in her imagination a strong desire to become a wit.

The pleasures with which this new character appeared to teem were so numerous and so great, that she was impatient to enjoy them, and, rising before the sun, hastened to the place where she knew that her fairy patroness was

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always to be found. Lilinet was willing to conduct her, but could now scarcely restrain her from leading the way but by telling her, that, if she went first, the fairies of the cavern would refuse her passage.

They came in time to the fountain, and Floretta took the golden cup into her hand; she filled it and drank, and again she filled it, for wit was sweeter than riches, spirit, or beauty.

As she returned she felt new successions of imagery rise in her mind, and whatever her memory offered to her imagination, assumed a new form, and connected itself with things to which it seemed before to have no relation. All the appearances about her were changed, but the novelties exhibited were commonly defects. She now saw that almost every thing was wrong, without often seeing how it could be better; and frequently imputed to the imperfection of art those failures which were caused by the limitation of nature.

Wherever she went, she breathed nothing but censure and reformation. If she visited her friends, she quarrelled with the situation of their houses, the disposition of their gardens, the direction of their walks, and the termination of their views. It was vain to show her fine furniture, for she was always ready to tell how it might be finer, or to conduct her through spacious apartments, for her thoughts were full of nobler fabricks, of airy palaces, and Hesperian gardens. She admired nothing, and praised but little.

Her conversation was generally thought uncivil. If she received flatteries, she seldom repaid them: for she set no value upon vulgar praise. She could not hear a long story without hurrying the speaker on to the conclusion; and obstructed the mirth of her companions, for she rarely took notice of a good jest, and never laughed except when she was delighted.

This behaviour made her unwelcome wherever she went; nor did her speculation upon human manners much contribute to forward her reception. She now saw the dis-

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proportions between language and sentiment, between passion and exclamation; she discovered the defects of every action, and the uncertainty of every conclusion; she knew the malignity of friendship, the avarice of liberality, the anxiety of content, and the cowardice of temerity.

To see all this was pleasant, but the greatest of all pleasures was to show it. To laugh was something, but it was much more to make others laugh. As every deformity of character made a strong impression upon her, she could not always forbear to transmit it to others; as she hated false appearances, she thought it her duty to detect them, till, between wantonness and virtue, scarce any that she knew escaped without some wounds by the shafts of ridicule; not that her merriment was always the consequence of total contempt, for she often honoured virtue, where she laughed at affectation.

For these practices, and who can wonder? the cry was raised against her from every quarter, and to hunt her down, was generally determined. Every eye was watching for a fault, and every tongue was busy to supply its share of defamation. With the most unpolluted purity of mind, she was censured as too free of favours, because she was not afraid to talk with men: with generous sensibility of every human excellence, she was thought cold or envious, because she could not scatter praise with undistinguishing profusion: with tenderness, that agonized at real misery, she was charged with delight in the pain of others, when she would not condole with those whom she knew to counterfeit affliction. She derided false appearances of kindness and of pity, and was, therefore, avoided as an enemy to society. As she seldom commended or censured, but with some limitations and exceptions, the world condemned her as indifferent to the good and bad; and because she was often doubtful, where others were confident, she was charged with laxity of principles, while her days were distracted, and her rest broken, by niceties of honour, and scruples of morality.

Report had now made her so formidable, that all flat-

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tered, and all shunned her. If a lover gave a ball to his mistress and her friends, it was stipulated, that Floretta should not be invited. If she entered a publick room, the ladies curtsied, and shrunk away, for there was no such thing as speaking, but Floretta would find something to criticise. If a girl was more sprightly than her aunt, she was threatened, that in a little time she would be like Floretta. Visits were very diligently paid, when Floretta was known not to be at home; and no mother trusted her daughter to herself, without a caution, if she should meet Floretta, to leave the company as soon as she could.

With all this Floretta made sport at first, but in time grew weary of general hostility. She would have been content with a few friends, but no friendship was durable; it was the fashion to desert her, and with the fashion what fidelity will contend? She could have easily amused herself in solitude, but that she thought it mean to quit the field to treachery and folly.

Persecution at length tired her constancy, and she implored Lilinet to rid her of her wit: Lilinet complied, and walked up the mountain, but was often forced to stop, and wait for her follower. When they came to the flinty fountain, Floretta filled a small cup, and slowly brought it to her lips, but the water was insupportably bitter. She just tasted it, and dashed it to the ground, diluted the bitterness at the fountain of alabaster, and resolved to keep her wit, with all its consequences.

Being now a wit for life, she surveyed the various conditions of mankind with such superiority of sentiment, that she found few distinctions to be envied or desired, and, therefore, did not very soon make another visit to the fountain. At length, being alarmed by sickness, she resolved to drink length of life from the golden cup. She returned, elated and secure, for though the longevity acquired was indeterminate, she considered death as far distant, and, therefore, suffered it not to intrude upon her pleasures.

But length of life included not perpetual health. She

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felt herself continually decaying, and saw the world fading about her. The delights of her early days would delight no longer, and however widely she extended her view, no new pleasure could be found; her friends, her enemies, her admirers, her rivals, dropped one by one into the grave, and with those who succeeded them, she had neither community of joys, nor strife of competition.

By this time she began to doubt whether old age were not dangerous to virtue; whether pain would not produce peevishness, and peevishness impair benevolence. She thought that the spectacle of life might be too long continued, and the vices which were often seen, might raise less abhorrence; that resolution might be sapped by time, and let that virtue sink, which in its firmest state it had not, without difficulty, supported; and that it was vain to delay the hour which must come at last, and might come at a time of less preparation, and greater imbecility.

These thoughts led her to Lilinet, whom she accompanied to the flinty fountain; where, after a short combat with herself, she drank the bitter water. They walked back to the favourite bush, pensive and silent: "And now," said she, "accept my thanks for the last benefit that Floretta can receive." Lady Lilinet dropped a tear, impressed upon her lips the final kiss, and resigned her, as she resigned herself, to the course of nature.

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PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS

COMPOSED BY

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

Published from his Manuscripts by George Strahan, D. D. Prebendary of Rochester, and Vicar of Islington.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION IN 1785.

THESE posthumous devotions of Dr. Johnson will be, no doubt, welcomed by the public, with a distinction similar to that which has been already paid to his other works.

During many years of his life, he statedly observed certain days* with a religious solemnity; on which, and other occasions, it was his custom to compose suitable prayers and meditations; committing them to writing for his own use, and, as he assured me, without any view to their publication. But being last summer on a visit at Oxford to the reverend Dr. Adams †, and that gentleman urging him repeatedly to engage in some work of this kind, he then first conceived a design to revise these pious effusions, and bequeathed them, with enlargements, to the use and benefit of others.

Infirmities, however, now growing fast upon him, he at

* Viz. New Year's Day; March 28, the day on which his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Johnson, died; Good-Friday; Easter-Day; and September the 18th, his own birth-day.

† Master of Pembroke College, at which Dr. Johnson received part of his education.

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length changed this design, and determined to give the manuscripts, without revision, in charge to me, as I had long shared his intimacy, and was at this time his daily attendant. Accordingly, one morning, on my visiting him by desire at an early hour, he put these papers into my hands, with instructions for committing them to the press, and with a promise to prepare a sketch of his own life to accompany them. But the performance of this promise also was prevented, partly by his hasty destruction of some private memoirs, which he afterwards lamented, and partly by that incurable sickness, which soon ended in his dissolution.

As a biographer, he is allowed to have excelled without a rival; and we may justly regret that he who had so advantageously transmitted to posterity the memories of other eminent men, should have been thus prevented doing equal honour to his own. But the particulars of this venerable man's personal history may still, in great measure, be preserved; and the public are authorised to expect them from some of his many friends, who are zealous to augment the monument of his fame by the detail of his private virtues *.

That the authenticity of this work may never be called in question, the original manuscript will be deposited in the library of Pembroke College in Oxford. Dr. Bray's associates are to receive the profits of the first edition, by the author's appointment; and any further advantages that accrue, will be distributed among his relations †.

* Since this Preface was written, the following publications have appeared, viz.

Anecdotes of the late Dr. Johnson, during the last Twenty Years of his Life, by Hester Lynch Piozzi. 3rd edit. 1786, small 8vo.

The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL. D. published with his Works, by sir John Hawkins, 8vo. 1787.

The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL. D. by James Boswell, esq. first published in 2 vols. 4to. afterwards (1793) in three. A new edition, with Notes, &c. is preparing by the editor of this edition of his Works, with which it will be printed uniform.

An Essay on the Life and Genius of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. by Arthur Murphy, esq. 8vo. 1792, prefixed to this edition.

† The profits of the first edition were accordingly paid to Dr. Bray's associates; and those of the second have been distributed among Dr.

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I have now discharged the trust reposed in me by that friend, whose labours entitle him to lasting gratitude and veneration from the literary, and still more from the christian world. His Lives of the English Poets "are written," as he justly hopes,* "in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety." This merit may be ascribed, with equal truth, to most of his other works; and doubtless to his Sermons, none of which indeed have yet been made public, nor is it known where they are extant; though it be certain, from his own acknowledgement, both in conversation and writing,† that he composed many. As he seems to have turned his thoughts with peculiar earnestness to the study of religious subjects, we may presume these remains would deserve to be numbered among his happiest productions. It is, therefore, hoped they have fallen into the hands of those, who will not withhold them in obscurity, but consider them as deposits, the seclusion of which, from general use, would be an injurious diminution of their author's fame, and retrenchment from the common stock of serious instruction. ‡

But the integrity of his mind was not only speculatively shadowed in his writings, but substantially exemplified in his life. His prayers and his alms, like those of the good Cornelius, went up for an incessant memorial; and always, from

Johnson's poor relations and connexions, all of whom are since dead, except Humphrey Hely, who married ——— Ford, sister to the Rev. Cornelius Ford, and first cousin to our author. This poor man, who has seen better days is now a tenant of Whicher's Alms-houses, Chapel street, Westminster. [It is now, April 1817, about twenty years since he died in these Alms-houses, and was buried in the adjoining burial-ground belonging to St. Margaret's Chapel.]

* See p. 265.

† P. 264.

‡ In 1788 appeared one volume, and in 1789 a second, of Sermons on different subjects, left for publication by John Taylor, LL.D. late Prebendary of Westminster, &c. published by the Rev. Samuel Hayes, A. M. Usher of Westminster School. To the second volume is added a Sermon avowedly written by Dr. Johnson, for the funeral of his wife: and from internal and other evidence, the whole contents of both volumes are now generally ascribed to the same author. They are, for the first time, placed among his collected works in this edition.

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a heart deeply impressed with piety, never insensible to the calls of friendship or compassion, and prone to melt in effusions of tenderness on the slightest incitement.

When, among other articles in his Dictionary, Lichfield presents itself to his notice, he salutes that place of his nativity in these words of Virgil, *Salve, magna parens.* Nor was the salutation adopted without reason; for well might he denominate his parent city great, who, by the celebrity of his name, hath for ever made it so—

> Salve, magna parens frugum, *Staffordia* tellus,
> Magna virûm. VIRG. Georg. lib. ii. l. 173.

More decisive testimonies of his affectionate sensibility are exhibited in the following work, where he bewails the successive depredations of death on his relations and friends; whose virtues, thus mournfully suggested to his recollection, he seldom omits to recite, with ardent wishes for their acquittal at the throne of mercy. In praying, however, with restriction,* for these regretted tenants of the grave, he indeed conformed to a practice, which, though it has been retained by other learned members of our church, her liturgy no longer admits, and many, who adhere to her communion, avowedly disapprove. That such prayers are, or may be, efficacious, they who sincerely offer them must believe. But may not a belief in their efficacy, so far as it prevails, be attended with danger to those who entertain it? May it not incline them to carelessness; and promote a neglect of repentance by inducing a per-

* Our author informs us, that his prayers for deceased friends were offered up, on several occasions *as far as might be lawful for him;* and once (p. 244,) *with Preface of Permission:* whence it should seem that he had some doubt concerning the lawfulness of such prayers, though it does not appear that he ever discontinued the use of them. It is also observable, that in his reflections on the death of his wife, (p. 262,) and again of Mr. Thrale, (p. 271,) he wishes that the Almighty not *may have,* but *may have had,* mercy on them; evidently supposing their sentence to have been already passed in the Divine Mind. This supposition, indeed, may seem not very consistent with his recommending them to the Divine Mercy afterwards. It proves, however, that he had no belief in a state of Purgatory, and consequently no reason for praying for the dead, that could impeach the sincerity of his profession as a Protestant.

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suasion, that, without it, pardon may be obtained through these vicarious intercessions? Indeed the doctrine (I speak with deference to the great names that have espoused it) seems inconsistent with some principles generally allowed among us. If, "where the tree falleth, there it shall be;" if, as Protestants maintain, our state at the close of life is to be the measure of our final sentence; then prayers for the dead, being visibly fruitless, can be regarded only as the vain oblations of superstition. But of all superstitions, this, perhaps, is one of the least unamiable, and most incident to a good mind. If our sensations of kindness be intense, those whom we have revered and loved during life, death, which removes them from sight, cannot wholly exclude from our concern. The fondness, kindled by intercourse, will still glow from memory, and prompt us to wish, perhaps to pray, that the valued dead, to whose felicity our friendship can no longer minister, may find acceptance with Him, "who giveth us," and them, "richly all things to enjoy." It is true, for the reason just mentioned, such evidences of our surviving affection may be thought ill-judged; but surely they are generous; and some natural tenderness is due even to a superstition, which thus originates in piety and benevolence.

We see our author, in one place,* purposing with seriousness to remember his brother's dream; in another† owing his embarrassment from needless stipulations; and, on many occasions, noting, with a circumstantial minuteness, the process of his religious fasts. But these peculiarities, if they betray some tincture of the propensity already observed, prove, for the most part, the pious tenour of his thoughts. They indicate a mind ardently zealous to please God, and anxious to evince its alacrity in his service, by a scrupulous observance of more than enjoined duties.

But however the soundness of his principles might, in general, be apparent, he seems to have lived with a perpetual conviction that his conduct was defective; lamenting past neglects, forming purposes of future diligence, and constantly

* P. 216. † P. 260.

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acknowledging their failure in the event. It was natural for him, who possessed such powers of usefulness, to consider the waste of his time as a peculiar delinquency; with which, however, he appears to have been far less frequently, and less culpably chargeable, than his own tender sense of duty disposed him to apprehend. That he meritoriously redeemed many days and years from indolence, is evinced by the number and excellence of his works; nor can we doubt that his literary exertions would have been still more frequent, had not *morbid melancholy*, which, as he informs us,* was the infirmity of his life, repressed them. To the prevalence of this infirmity, we may certainly ascribe that anxious fear, which seized him on the approach of his dissolution, and which his friends, who knew his integrity, observed with equal astonishment and concern. But the strength of religion at length prevailed against the frailty of nature; and his foreboding dread of the Divine Justice by degrees subsided into a pious trust and humble hope in the Divine mercy.

He is now gone to await his eternal sentence; and as his life exhibited an illustrious example, so his death suggests an interesting admonition. It concerns us to reflect, that however many may find it impossible to rival his intellectual excellence, yet to imitate his virtues is both possible and necessary to all; that the current of time now hastens to plunge us in that gulf of death, where we have so lately seen him absorbed, where there is no more place of repentance, and whence, according to our innocence or guilt, we shall rise to an immortality of bliss or torment.

GEORGE STRAHAN.

ISLINGTON,
August 6, 1785.

* P. 255.

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

To this Edition is added [at p. 208] a Prayer now in my possession in Dr. Johnson's own handwriting, in which he expressly supposes that Providence may permit him to enjoy the good effects of his wife's attention and ministration by appearance, impulses, or dreams. It is well known, that he admitted the credibility of apparitions: and in his Rasselas,* he maintains it, in the person of Imlac, by the following acute train of reasoning:

"That the dead are seen no more," said Imlac, "I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which, perhaps, prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears."

Cavillers have indeed doubted the credibility of this tale, rejecting it in every instance as the dream of delusion, or the fiction of imposture.

That many tales of apparitions have originated in delusion, and many in imposture, cannot be denied; and the whole question to be considered in this case is, how far we have authority for believing that any are founded in truth or probability.

Some have thought all such reported appearances liable to suspicion, because in general they seem called forth by no exigency, and calculated to administer to no end or purpose. This

* Vol. I. Chap. xxxi.

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circumstance, so far as it may be observed, will authorize a presumption that they are not the fabrications of imposture; which has always some end, commonly a discoverable end, to promote by its illusions. At any rate, our ignorance of the purpose or end can be no disproof of the fact: and the purposes of Providence in the events most obvious to our notice, observably often elude our scrutiny.

Still the acknowledged millions of the dead that *are seen no more* induce a reluctance to believe in the reappearance of any, however attested. Common incidents, though often not less inexplicable than those which are unusual, become familiar to our observation, and soon cease to excite our wonder. But rare and preternatural occurrences astonish and shock belief by their novelty; and apparitions are by many accounted things so improbable in themselves, as not to be rendered credible by any external testimony. The same charge of insuperable incredibility has been urged against miracles; and in both cases proceeds upon a supposition, evidently erroneous, that the improbable nature of any alleged event is a stronger evidence of its falsity, than the best approved testimony can be of its truth.

It is confessed that extraordinary events, when rumoured, are, till proved, less probable than those that are common; because their occurrence having been less frequent, their existence has been verified in fewer instances by experience. And, upon the same principle, the more remote any reported phenomenon appears to be from what we ordinarily observe in nature, the greater, antecedently to its authentication by evidence, is its improbability.

But improbability arising from rarity of occurrence, or singularity of nature, amounts to no disproof; it is a presumptive reason of doubt, too feeble to withstand the conviction induced by positive and credible testimony, such as that which has been borne to shadowy reappearances of the dead. These, as our author intimates, have been uniformly attested in every age and country, by persons who had no communication or knowledge of each other, and whose concurrence of testimony

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in this case can be accounted for only by a supposition of its truth. It is evidently a far greater improbability, that witnesses so numerous, so dispersed, and unconnected, should concur in forging so extraordinary a relation, than that such a relation, extraordinary as it is, should be true. For though the several objects we meet in the world be in general formed according to observably stated laws; yet anomalies in nature may occur, and their occurrence has been occasionally asserted and believed on less accumulated attestation. We now at length have ceased to question the supernatural stature of the Patagonians; why, then, are we so unwilling to admit the more amply witnessed existence of apparitions? because the degree of prodigiousness implied in the supposition of a visible spirit strikes the imagination as too stupendous for belief. This is the effect of measuring the credibility of the attested achievements of nature by our own narrow experience, not by the power of Him, who is the author of nature, and to whom *all things*, even the investing spirits with visibility, *are possible*. We have constant assurance of other natural processes not less difficult to account for than this, which we contemplate with such indignant mistrust. Nor can it on reflection appear more surprising or incomprehensible, that a spirit should assume a visible shape, than that it should animate and move a material body. The wonders we see may soften our incredulity to patience of those which we have not seen, but which all tradition attests. Nothing possible in itself, and proved by sufficient evidence, can be too prodigious for rational belief.

But even the evidence of our own senses is disputed by some reasoners, who pronounce every believed view of these unsubstantial forms to be a mere illusion of the fancy, engendered by disease, indigestion, and other bodily affections. Bodily affections, it is certain, have been known to bewilder the views of the mind; and instances enough may be produced of men not generally supposed insane, who have been deluded and possessed with the most extravagant conceptions, by the vapours of distempered health. But by what token do these philosophers discover, that the witnesses of the fact in question, whom

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they never saw, and of whose mental or bodily state they can have no knowledge, were so enfeebled and distracted in their powers of perception? Can it be proved, that apparitions of the dead, however astonishing, are impossible? Or, if not, upon what principle is it maintained invariably, that they who think they see such phantoms, see them only in imagination? According to this tenour of reasoning, all truth, not obvious to common experience, might be sacrificed to prejudice, and every rare fact, which we were unwilling to admit, might be exploded, by the short method of supposing, that the witnesses of it at the time must have been bereft of their senses. Writers, who thus get rid of evidence by presuming it the effect of fascination, betray some share of the infirmity they impute, and judge with a reason palpably overpowered and distorted by the influence of opinion.

Others, perceiving that few, if any, apparitions have been authenticated in the present day, are thence induced to infer too hastily that none were ever seen. These visible departed shades are extraordinary exhibitions in nature, reported to have been observed in all nations occasionally, but at no stated times. During some periods they may occur with more frequency, in others with less; and the proof of their former occurrence, once established, is not to be weakened, much less done away, by the protracted delay or discontinuance of their renewal.

Nor can it generally reflect discredit on averred appearances of the dead, that they are observed to abound most in ignorant and dark ages. At such junctures, a fabulous increase of these, and other strange casualties, we may expect, will be supplied by the reveries of superstition, or the interested impositions of craft upon credulity. But because in times of ignorance, prodigies of this sort will seem to multiply by the more than usual obtrusion of such as are false; is it reasonable to conclude, that none we hear of, either in those times, or at any other, are true? Does the utmost abundance of counterfeits, in this or in any case, disprove the existence of genuine originals? On the contrary, without the supposition of some

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such originals, might it not be difficult to conjecture, how even the counterfeits of occurrences so strange should become so universal? And does not their experienced universality hence strongly tend to prove, that at least the earliest of them were imitations of some real models; shadows devised after substances; forgeries of fancy or fraud, which derived their origin, and received their form, from the suggestion and example of fact?

Possibly it may yet be objected that the belief in the existence of the soul in a separate state, which has always obtained extensively, might lead to the belief, without the experimental witness, of its appearance.

It were easy to show, that disembodied souls have been believed, not only to exist, but to be constantly present, where they were not imagined to be visible; and consequently that the supposition mentioned, which can be proved true in no case, is ascertained to be groundless in some cases, and upon the balance of its evidence not probable in any.

But it is needless to contend against a supposition so manifestly visionary. All men, in all times, must have perceived, that the soul, however it might continue to exist after its separation from the body, did not ordinarily appear on earth; and, till it had appeared, they could have no reason for supposing, in opposition to their past experience, that it ever would. The departed spirit, for aught they could foresee, might always survive invisibly; and their belief, if they afterwards entertained any, could be induced only by their sensible perception of its appearance.

Accordingly, tradition informs us, that sensible evidence has not been wanting in this case. In every age and country the posthumous appearance of the soul has been believed, not on the authority of conjecture, but on the attestations of persons who severally declared themselves eye-witnesses of it in distinct instances. If it be said, that these attestations might all be founded, as many of them confessedly were, in delusion or imposture; still it will be difficult, if not impossible, to account for so general a consent in so strange a fiction. One

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true report that a spirit has been seen, may give occasion and birth to many false reports of similar incidents. But universal and unconcerted testimony to a supernatural casualty cannot always be untrue; nor is it conceivable, that they who lived in distant ages and nations, who *never heard of one another*, should agree, either in a delusion or imposture so remote from common conception, and so unlike any thing observable in the ordinary course of events. An appearing spirit is a prodigy too singular in its nature to become a subject of general invention. That this prodigy has been every where counterfeited, proves only that it has every where in reality occurred to view. The fable bears witness to the fact of its existence; and, to a mind not influenced by popular prejudice, it will be scarce possible to believe, that apparitions of the dead could have been vouched in all countries, had they never been seen in any.

The opinion we have been considering, whether true or false, may at last be thought of too trivial moment to require or justify a discussion in this place. But to show the credibility of this opinion, chiefly by our author's own arguments, to which nothing of equal weight can be added, seemed not only due to him on the present occasion, but requisite in another important view. Appearances of departed spirits are occasionally recorded in Scripture;* and as all indiscriminate objections against the reality of such appearances hence evidently impeach the testimony of Scripture, the above notice of the fallacy of some currently urged objections of this sort was not unseasonable, and may not, it is hoped, be altogether useless. It was the superstition of the dark ages to believe in many false miracles and apparitions; whence it seems often the insinuated wisdom of our enlightened times, to accept none, however authenticated in any age, for true; as if the folly of baseless unbelief were less than that of credulity; and it were not the province of instructed judgment to decide in no case capriciously or blindly, resist prejudice, and be determined by evidence.

GEORGE STRAHAN.

Islington, May 2, 1789.

* See 1 Sam. xxviii. 14. and Matt. xvii. 3.

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PRAYERS

AND

MEDITATIONS.

1738.

On my Birth Day.

September, $\frac{7}{17}$.

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Father of all mercies, I, thine unworthy servant, do give Thee most humble thanks, for all thy goodness and loving kindness to me. I bless Thee for my creation, preservation, and redemption, for the knowledge of thy Son Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and the hope of glory. In the days of childhood and youth, in the midst of weakness, blindness, and danger, Thou hast protected me; amidst afflictions of mind, body, and estate, Thou hast supported me; and amidst vanity and wickedness, Thou hast spared me. Grant, O merciful Father, that I may have a lively sense of thy mercies. Create in me a contrite heart, that I may worthily lament my sins and acknowledge my wickedness, and obtain remission and forgiveness, through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. And, O Lord, enable me, by thy grace, to redeem the time which I have spent in sloth, vanity, and wickedness; to make use of thy gifts to the honour of thy name; to lead a new life in thy faith, fear, and love; and finally to obtain everlasting life.

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Grant this, Almighty Lord, for the merits and through the mediation of our most holy and blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Transcribed, June 26, 1768.

This is the first solemn prayer, of which I have a copy. Whether I composed any before this, I question.

1744-5.

January 1.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, in whose hands are life and death, by whose will all things were created, and by whose providence they are sustained, I return Thee thanks that Thou hast given me life, and that Thou hast continued it to this time; that Thou hast hitherto forborn to snatch me away in the midst of sin and folly, and hast permitted me still to enjoy the means of grace, and vouchsafed to call me yet again to repentance. Grant, O merciful Lord, that thy call may not be vain; that my life may not be continued to increase my guilt, and that thy gracious forbearance may not harden my heart in wickedness. Let me remember, O my God, that as days and years pass over me, I approach nearer to the grave, where there is no repentance; and grant, that by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, I may so pass through this life, that I may obtain life everlasting, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

1747-8.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast not yet suffered me to fall into the grave; grant that I may so remember my past life, as to repent of the days and years which I have spent in forgetfulness of thy mercy,

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and neglect of my own salvation; and so use the time which Thou shalt yet allow me, as that I may become every day more diligent in the duties which, in thy providence, shall be assigned me; and that, when at last I shall be called to judgment, I may be received as a good and faithful servant into everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1749-50.

January 1, after 3 in the morning.

ALMIGHTY God, by whose will I was created, and by whose providence I have been sustained, by whose mercy I have been called to the knowledge of my Redeemer, and by whose grace whatever I have thought or acted acceptable to Thee has been inspired and directed; grant, O Lord, that in reviewing my past life, I may recollect thy mercies to my preservation, in whatever state Thou preparest for me; that in affliction I may remember how often I have been succoured; and in prosperity may know and confess from whose hand the blessing is received. Let me, O Lord, so remember my sins, that I may abolish them by true repentance, and so improve the year to which Thou hast graciously extended my life, and all the years which Thou shalt yet allow me, that I may hourly become purer in thy sight; so that I may live in thy fear, and die in thy favour, and find mercy at the last day, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer on the RAMBLER.

ALMIGHTY God, the giver of all good things, without whose help all labour is ineffectual, and without whose grace all wisdom is folly; grant, I beseech Thee, that in this my undertaking, thy Holy Spirit may not be withheld from me, but that I may promote thy glory, and the salvation both of myself and others; grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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1752.

PRAYERS[a] *composed by me on the Death of my Wife, and reposited among her Memorials, May* 8, 1752.

Deus exaudi.——Heu!

April 24, 1752.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who lovest those whom thou punishest, and turnest away thy anger from the penitent, look down with pity upon my sorrows, and grant that the affliction which it has pleased Thee to bring upon me, may awaken my conscience, enforce my resolutions of a better life, and impress upon me such conviction of thy power and goodness, that I may place in Thee my only felicity, and endeavour to please Thee in all my thoughts, words, and actions. Grant, O Lord, that I may not languish in fruitless and unavailing sorrow, but that I may consider from whose hand all good and evil is received, and may remember that I am punished for my sins, and hope for comfort only by repentance. Grant, O merciful God, that by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit I may repent, and be comforted, obtain that peace which the world cannot give, pass the residue of my life in humble resignation and cheerful obedience; and when it shall please Thee to call me from this mortal state, resign myself into thy hands with faith and confidence, and finally obtain mercy and everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

April 25, 1752.

O LORD, our heavenly Father, almighty and most merciful God, in whose hands are life and death, who givest and takest away, castest down and raisest up, look with mercy on the affliction of thy unworthy servant, turn away thine anger from me, and speak peace to my troubled soul. Grant me the assistance and comfort of thy

[a] *Viz.* The four following prayers.

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Holy Spirit, that I may remember with thankfulness the blessings so long enjoyed by me in the society of my departed wife; make me so to think on her precepts and example, that I may imitate whatever was in her life acceptable in thy sight, and avoid all by which she offended Thee. Forgive me, O merciful Lord, all my sins, and enable me to begin and perfect that reformation which I promised her, and to persevere in that resolution, which she implored Thee to continue, in the purposes which I recorded in thy sight, when she lay dead before me, in obedience to thy laws, and faith in thy word. And now, O Lord, release me from my sorrow, fill me with just hopes, true faith, and holy consolations, and enable me to do my duty in that state of life to which Thou hast been pleased to call me, without disturbance from fruitless grief, or tumultuous imaginations; that in all my thoughts, words, and actions, I may glorify thy Holy Name, and finally obtain, what I hope Thou hast granted to thy departed servant, everlasting joy and felicity, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

May 6, 1752.

O LORD, our heavenly Father, without whom all purposes are frustrate, all efforts are vain, grant me the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, that I may not sorrow as one without hope, but may now return to the duties of my present state with humble confidence in thy protection, and so govern my thoughts and actions, that neither business may withdraw my mind from Thee, nor idleness lay me open to vain imagination; that neither praise may fill me with pride, nor censure with discontent; but that in the changes of this life, I may fix my heart upon the reward which Thou hast promised to them that serve Thee, and that whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever are pure, whatever are lovely, whatever are of good report, wherein there is virtue, wherein there is praise, I may think upon and do, and obtain mercy and everlasting hap-

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piness. Grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father, &c.—The grace, &c.

May 6. I used this service, written April 24, 25, May 6, as preparatory to my return to life to-morrow.

Μακάριοι οἱ νεκροὶ οἱ ἐν Κυρίῳ ἀποθνήσκοντες ἀπάρτι. Apoc. xiv. 13.

April 26, 1752, being after 12 at night of the 25th.

O Lord, Governour of heaven and earth, in whose hands are embodied and departed spirits, if Thou hast ordained the souls of the dead to minister to the living, and appointed my departed wife to have care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attention and ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses, dreams, or in any other manner agreeable to thy government; forgive my presumption, enlighten my ignorance, and, however meaner agents are employed, grant me the blessed influences of thy Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Before any new Study.

November.

Almighty God, in whose hands are all the powers of man; who givest understanding, and takest it away; who, as it seemeth good unto Thee, enlightenest the thoughts of the simple, and darkenest the meditations of the wise, be present with me in my studies and inquiries.

Grant, O Lord, that I may not lavish away the life which thou hast given me on useless trifles, nor waste it in vain searches after things which Thou hast hidden from me.

Enable me, by thy Holy Spirit, so to shun sloth and negligence, that every day may discharge part of the task which Thou hast allotted me; and so further with thy help that labour which, without thy help, must be ineffectual, that I may obtain, in all my undertakings, such success as will most promote thy glory, and the salvation of my own soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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After Time negligently and unprofitably spent.

November 19.

O LORD, in whose hands are life and death, by whose power I am sustained, and by whose mercy I am spared, look down upon me with pity. Forgive me, that I have this day neglected the duty which Thou hast assigned to it, and suffered the hours, of which I must give account, to pass away without any endeavour to accomplish thy will, or to promote my own salvation. Make me to remember, O God, that every day is thy gift, and ought to be used according to thy command. Grant me, therefore, so to repent of my negligence, that I may obtain mercy from Thee, and pass the time which thou shalt yet allow me in diligent performance of thy commands, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

1753.

On Easter Day.

April 22.

O LORD, who givest the grace of repentance, and hearest the prayers of the penitent, grant, that, by true contrition, I may obtain forgiveness of all the sins committed, and of all duties neglected, in my union with the wife whom Thou hast taken from me; for the neglect of joint devotion, patient exhortation, and mild instruction. And, O Lord, who canst change evil to good, grant that the loss of my wife may so mortify all inordinate affections in me, that I may henceforth please Thee by holiness of life.

And, O Lord, so far as it may be lawful for me, I commend to thy fatherly goodness the soul of my departed wife; beseeching Thee to grant her whatever is best in her present state, and finally to receive her to eternal happiness. All this I beg for Jesus Christ's sake, whose death I am now about to commemorate. To whom, &c. Amen.

This I repeated sometimes at church.

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1754.

Fl. Lacr. [*Flentibus lacrymis.*]

March 28, in the morning.

O GOD, who on this day wert pleased to take from me my dear wife, sanctify to me my sorrows and reflections. Grant, that I may renew and practise the resolutions which I made when thy afflicting hand was upon me. Let the remembrance of thy judgments, by which my wife is taken away, awaken me to repentance; and the sense of thy mercy, by which I am spared, strengthen my hope and confidence in Thee, that, by the assistance and comfort of thy Holy Spirit, I may so pass through things temporal, as finally to gain everlasting happiness, and to pass, by a holy and happy death, into the joy which Thou hast prepared for those that love Thee. Grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The melancholy of this day hung long upon me.

Of the resolutions made this day, I, in some measure, kept that of breaking from indolence.

March 28, 1754, at night.

ALMIGHTY God, vouchsafe to sanctify unto me the reflections and resolutions of this day; let not my sorrow be unprofitable: let not my resolutions be vain. Grant that my grief may produce true repentance, so that I may live to please Thee; and when the time shall come that I must die like her whom Thou hast taken from me, grant me eternal happiness in thy presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1755.

On the Study of Philosophy, as an instrument of Living.

July.

O LORD, who hast ordained labour to be the lot of man, and seest the necessities of all thy creatures, bless my studies and endeavours; feed me with food convenient for me; and if it shall be thy good pleasure to intrust me

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with plenty, give me a compassionate heart, that I may be ready to relieve the wants of others; let neither poverty nor riches estrange my heart from Thee, but assist me with thy grace so to live as that I may die in thy favour, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

This study was not pursued.

Transcribed June 26, 1768.

1756.

January 1, afternoon.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, in whom we live and move, and have our being; glory be to Thee for my recovery from sickness, and the continuance of my life. Grant, O my God, that I may improve the year which I am now beginning, and all the days which Thou shalt add to my life, by serious repentance and diligent obedience; that, by the help of thy Holy Spirit, I may use the means of grace to my own salvation, and, at last, enjoy thy presence in eternal happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

HILL BOOTHBY'S *Death.*

January, 1756.

O LORD God, almighty disposer of all things, in whose hands are life and death, who givest comforts and takest them away, I return Thee thanks for the good example of Hill Boothby, whom Thou hast now taken away, and implore thy grace, that I may improve the opportunity of instruction which Thou hast afforded me, by the knowledge of her life, and by the sense of her death; that I may consider the uncertainty of my present state, and apply myself earnestly to the duties which Thou hast set before me, that living in thy fear, I may die in thy favour, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I commend, &c. W. and H. B.

Transcribed June 26, 1768.

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When my Eye was restored to its Use.

February 15, 1756.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast restored light to my eye, and enabled me to pursue again the studies which Thou hast set before me; teach me, by the diminution of my sight, to remember that whatever I possess is thy gift, and by its recovery, to hope for thy mercy: and, O Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from me; but grant that I may use thy bounties according to thy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Introductory Prayer.

March 25, 1756.

O GOD, who desirest not the death of a sinner, look down with mercy upon me, now daring to call upon Thee. Let thy Holy Spirit so purify my affections, and exalt my desires, that my prayer may be acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

March 28, about 2 in the morning.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, whose judgments terminate in mercy, grant, I beseech Thee, that the remembrance of my wife, whom Thou hast taken from me, may not load my soul with unprofitable sorrow, but may excite in me true repentance of my sins and negligences; and, by the cooperation of thy grace, may produce in me a new life, pleasing to Thee. Grant, that the loss of my wife may teach me the true use of the blessings which are yet left me; and that, however bereft of worldly comforts, I may find peace and refuge in thy service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1757.

January 1, at 2 in the morning.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast brought me to the beginning of another year, and by prolonging my life invitest to repentance, forgive me that I have mispent the time

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past; enable me, from this instant, to amend my life according to thy holy word; grant me thy Holy Spirit, that I may so pass through things temporal, as not finally to lose the things eternal. O God, hear my prayer for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Easter Eve.

ALMIGHTY God, heavenly Father, who desirest not the death of a sinner, look down with mercy upon me, depraved with vain imaginations, and entangled in long habits of sin. Grant me that grace, without which I can neither will nor do what is acceptable to Thee. Pardon my sins; remove the impediments that hinder my obedience; enable me to shake off sloth, and to redeem the time mispent in idleness and sin, by a diligent application of the days yet remaining to the duties which thy providence shall allot me. O God, grant me thy Holy Spirit, that I may repent and amend my life; grant me contrition, grant me resolution, for the sake of Jesus Christ, to whose covenant I now implore admission; of the benefits of whose death I implore participation. For his sake have mercy on me, O God; for his sake, O God, pardon and receive me. Amen.

September 18, 1757.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, by whose providence my life has been prolonged, and who hast granted me now to begin another year of probation, vouchsafe me such assistance of thy Holy Spirit, that the continuance of my life may not add to the measure of my guilt; but that I may so repent of the days and years passed in neglect of the duties which Thou hast set before me, in vain thoughts, in sloth, and in folly, that I may apply my heart to true wisdom, by diligence redeem the time lost, and by repentance obtain pardon, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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1758.

Easter Day.

March 26.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast created me to love and to serve Thee, enable me so to partake of the sacrament in which the death of Jesus Christ is commemorated, that I may, henceforward, lead a new life in thy faith and fear. Thou, who knowest my frailties and infirmities, strengthen and support me; grant me thy Holy Spirit, that, after all my lapses, I may now continue steadfast in obedience, that, after long habits of negligence and sin, I may, at last, work out my salvation with diligence and constancy; purify my thoughts from pollutions, and fix my affections on things eternal. Much of my time past has been lost in sloth; let not what remains, O Lord, be given me in vain; but let me, from this time, lead a better life, and serve Thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

March 28, 1758.

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, who givest life and takest it away, grant that, while Thou shalt prolong my continuance on earth, I may live with a due sense of thy mercy and forbearance, and let the remembrance of her whom thy hand has separated from me, teach me to consider the shortness and uncertainty of life, and to use all diligence to obtain eternal happiness in thy presence. O God, enable me to avoid sloth, and to attend heedfully and constantly to thy word and worship. Whatever was good in the example of my departed wife, teach me to follow; and whatever was amiss give me grace to shun, that my affliction may be sanctified, and that remembering how much every day brings me nearer to the grave, I may every day purify my mind, and amend my life, by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, till, at last, I shall be accepted by Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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Sept. 18, hora prima matutina.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who yet sparest and yet supportest me, who supportest me in my weakness, and sparest me in my sins, and hast now granted to me to begin another year, enable me to improve the time which is yet before me, to thy glory, and my own salvation. Impress upon my soul such repentance of the days mispent in idleness and folly, that I may, henceforward, diligently attend to the business of my station in this world, and to all the duties which thou hast commanded. Let thy Holy Spirit comfort and guide me, that in my passage through the pains or pleasures of the present state, I may never be tempted to forgetfulness of Thee. Let my life be useful, and my death be happy; let me live according to thy laws, and die with just confidence in thy mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This year I hope to learn diligence.

1759.

Jan. 23.

The day on which my dear mother was buried. Repeated on my fast, with the addition.

ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, in whose hands are life and death, sanctify unto me the sorrow which I now feel. Forgive me whatever I have done unkindly to my mother, and whatever I have omitted to do kindly. Make me to remember her good precepts and good example, and to reform my life according to thy holy word, that I may lose no more opportunities of good. I am sorrowful, O Lord; let not my sorrow be without fruit. Let it be followed by holy resolutions, and lasting amendment, that when I shall die like my mother, I may be received to everlasting life.

I commend, O Lord, so far as it may be lawful, into thy hands, the soul of my departed mother, beseeching thee to grant her whatever is most beneficial to her in her present state.

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O Lord, grant me thy Holy Spirit, and have mercy upon me for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

And, O Lord, grant unto me that am now about to return to the common comforts and business of the world, such moderation in all enjoyments, such diligence in honest labour, and such purity of mind, that, amidst the changes, miseries, or pleasures of life, I may keep my mind fixed upon thee, and improve every day in grace, till I shall be received into thy kingdom of eternal happiness.

I returned thanks for my mother's good example, and implored pardon for neglecting it.

I returned thanks for the alleviation of my sorrow.

The dream of my brother I shall remember.

Jej.

March 24, 1759,
rather 25, after 12 at night.

ALMIGHTY God, heavenly Father, who hast graciously prolonged my life to this time, and by the change of outward things which I am now to make, callest me to a change of inward affections, and to a reformation of my thoughts, words, and practices; vouchsafe, merciful Lord, that this call may not be vain. Forgive me whatever has been amiss in the state which I am now leaving, idleness, and neglect of thy word and worship. Grant me the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that the course which I am now beginning may proceed according to thy laws, and end in the enjoyment of thy favour. Give me, O Lord, pardon and peace, that I may serve thee with humble confidence, and after this life, enjoy thy presence in eternal happiness.

And, O Lord, so far as it may be lawful for me, I commend to thy Fatherly goodness, my father, my brother, my wife, my mother. I beseech Thee to look mercifully upon them, and grant them whatever may most promote their present and eternal joy.

O Lord, hear my prayers for Jesus Christ's sake, to whom, with Thee, and the Holy Ghost, three persons and

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one God, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

O Lord, let the change which I am now making in outward things, produce in me such a change of manners, as may fit me for the great change through which my wife has passed.

1760.

Sept. 18.

RESOLVED, D [*eo*] j [*vvante,*]

To combat notions of obligation.
To apply to study.
To reclaim imaginations.
To consult the resolves on Tetty's coffin.
To rise early.
To study religion.
To go to church.
To drink less strong liquors.
To keep a journal.
To oppose laziness, by doing what is to be done to-morrow.
Rise as early as I can.
Send for books for Hist. of War.
Put books in order.
Scheme of life.

O ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, who hast continued my life to another year, grant that I may spend the time which Thou shalt yet give me, in such obedience to thy word and will, that, finally, I may obtain everlasting life. Grant that I may repent and forsake my sins before the miseries of age fall upon me; and that while my strength yet remains, I may use it to thy glory and my own salvation, by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

1761.

Easter Eve.

SINCE the communion of last Easter, I have led a life so

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dissipated and useless, and my terrours and perplexities have so much increased, that I am under great depression and discouragement; yet I purpose to present myself before God to-morrow, with humble hope that he will not break the bruised reed.

Come unto me all ye that travail.

I have resolved, I hope not presumptuously, till I am afraid to resolve again. Yet, hoping in God, I steadfastly purpose to lead a new life. O God, enable me, for Jesus Christ's sake.

My purpose is,

To avoid idleness.
To regulate my sleep as to length and choice of hours.
To set down every day what shall be done the day following.
To keep a journal.
To worship God more diligently.
To go to church every Sunday.
To study the Scriptures.
To read a certain portion every week.

Easter Eve.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, look down upon my misery with pity: strengthen me that I may overcome all sinful habits; grant that I may, with effectual faith, commemorate the death of thy Son Jesus Christ, so that all corrupt desires may be extinguished, and all vain thoughts may be dispelled. Enlighten me with true knowledge, animate me with reasonable hope, comfort me with a just sense of thy love, and assist me to the performance of all holy purposes, that after the sins, errours, and miseries of this world, I may obtain everlasting happiness for Jesus Christ's sake. To whom, &c. Amen.

I hope to attend on God in his ordinances to-morrow.

Trust in God, O my soul. O God, let me trust in Thee.

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1762.

March 28.

GOD grant that I may, from this day,
Return to my studies.
Labour diligently.
Rise early.
Live temperately.
Read the Bible.
Go to church.

O GOD, giver and preserver of all life, by whose power I was created, and by whose providence I am sustained, look down upon me with tenderness and mercy; grant that I may not have been created to be finally destroyed; that I may not be preserved to add wickedness to wickedness; but may so repent me of my sins, and so order my life to come, that when I shall be called hence, like the wife whom Thou hast taken from me, I may die in peace, and in thy favour, and be received into thine everlasting kingdom, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ thine only Son our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

1764.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast redeemed us from sin and death, grant that the commemoration of his passion may quicken my repentance, increase my hope, and strengthen my faith; that I may lament and forsake my sins; and, for the time which Thou shalt yet grant me, may avoid idleness, and neglect of thy word and worship. Grant me strength to be diligent in the lawful employments which shall be set before me; grant me purity of thoughts, words, and actions. Grant me to love and study thy word, and to frequent thy worship with pure affections. Deliver and preserve me from vain terrours, and grant that by the grace of the Holy Spirit I may so live, that after this life is ended, I may be received to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Good Friday.

April 20, 1764.

I HAVE made no reformation; I have lived totally useless, more sensual in thought, and more addicted to wine and meat. Grant me, O God, to amend my life, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

I hope
To put my rooms in order.*
I fasted all day.

April 21, 1764, 3 in the morning.

MY indolence, since my last reception of the Sacrament, has sunk into grosser sluggishness, and my dissipation spread into wilder negligence. My thoughts have been clouded with sensuality; and, except that from the beginning of this year, I have in some measure forborn excess of strong drink, my appetites have predominated over my reason. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year; and perceive that incidents and intelligence pass over me without leaving any impression.

This is not the life to which heaven is promised. I purpose to approach the altar again to-morrow. Grant, O Lord, that I may receive the Sacrament with such resolutions of a better life as may by thy grace be effectual, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

APRIL 21. I read the whole gospel of St. John. Then sat up till the 22nd.

My purpose is from this time,
To reject or expel sensual images, and idle thoughts.
To provide some useful amusement for leisure time.
To avoid idleness.
To rise early.
To study a proper portion of every day.
To worship God diligently.
To read the Scriptures.
To let no week pass without reading some part.

* Disorder I have found one great cause of idleness.

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To write down my observations.

I will renew my resolutions made at Tetty's death.

I perceive an insensibility and heaviness upon me. I am less than commonly oppressed with the sense of sin, and less affected with the shame of idleness. Yet I will not despair. I will pray to God for resolution, and will endeavour to strengthen my faith in Christ by commemorating his death.

I prayed for Tett.

Easter Day.

April 22, 1764.

HAVING, before I went to bed, composed the foregoing meditation, and the following prayer; I tried to compose myself, but slept unquietly. I rose, took tea, and prayed for resolution and for perseverance. Thought on Tetty, dear poor Tetty, with my eyes full.

I went to church; came in at the first of the Psalms, and endeavoured to attend the service, which I went through without perturbation. After sermon, I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me.

I then prayed for resolution and perseverance to amend my life. I received soon; the communicants were many. At the altar, it occurred to me that I ought to form some resolutions. I resolved, in the presence of God, but without a vow, to repel sinful thoughts, to study eight hours daily, and, I think, to go to church every Sunday, and read the Scriptures. I gave a shilling; and seeing a poor girl at the sacrament in a bedgown, gave her privately a crown, though I saw Hart's hymns in her hand. I prayed earnestly for amendment, and repeated my prayer at home. Dined with Miss W., went to prayers at church; went to ———, spent the evening not pleasantly. Avoided wine, and tempered a very few glasses with sherbet. Came home and prayed.

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I saw at the Sacrament a man meanly dressed, whom I have always seen there at Easter.

Easter Day.

Against loose Thoughts and Idleness.

April 22, 1764, at 3 morning.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast created and preserved me, have pity on my weakness and corruption. Deliver me from habitual wickedness and idleness; enable me to purify my thoughts, to use the faculties which thou hast given me with honest diligence, and to regulate my life by thy holy word.

Grant me, O Lord, good purposes and steady resolution, that I may repent my sins, and amend my life. Deliver me from the distresses of vain terrour, and enable me, by thy grace, to will and to do what may please thee; that when I shall be called away from this present state, I may obtain everlasting happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sept. 18, 1764, about 6 evening.

THIS is my fifty-sixth birth-day, the day on which I have concluded fifty-five years.

I have outlived many friends. I have felt many sorrows. I have made few improvements. Since my resolution formed last Easter, I have made no advancement in knowledge or in goodness; nor do I recollect that I have endeavoured it. I am dejected, but not hopeless.

O God, for Jesus Christ's sake, have mercy upon me.

7 in the evening.

I went to church, prayed *to be loosed from the chain of my sins.*

I have now spent fifty-five years in resolving; having from the earliest time almost that I can remember, been forming schemes of a better life. I have done nothing; the need of doing, therefore, is pressing, since the time of doing is short. O God, grant me to re-

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solve aright, and to keep my resolutions, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Hæc limina vitæ. STAT.

I resolve.

To study the Scriptures; I hope, in the original languages. Six hundred and forty verses every Sunday, will nearly comprise the Scriptures in a year.

To read good books; to study theology.

To treasure in my mind passages for recollection.

To rise early; not later than six, if I can; I hope sooner, but as soon as I can.

To keep a journal, both of employment and of expenses. To keep accounts.

To take care of my health, by such means as I have designed.

To set down at night some plan for the morrow.

Last year I prayed on my birth-day, by accommodating the morning Collect for grace, putting *year* for *day*. This I did this day.

Sept. 18, 1764.

O GOD, heavenly Father, who desirest not the death of a sinner, grant that I may turn from my wickedness and live. Enable me to shake off all impediments of lawful action, and so to order my life, that increase of days may produce increase of grace, of tranquillity of thought, and vigour in duty. Grant that my resolves may be effectual to a holy life, and a happy death, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

To-morrow I purpose to regulate my room.

1765.

Easter Day.

April 7, about 3 in the morning.

I PURPOSE again to partake of the blessed Sacrament; yet when I consider how vainly I have hitherto resolved at this annual commemoration of my Saviour's death, to regulate my life by his laws, I am almost afraid to

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renew my resolutions. Since the last Easter I have reformed no evil habit, my time has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. My memory grows confused, and I know not how the days pass over me.

Good Lord, deliver me.

I will call upon God to-morrow for repentance and amendment. O heavenly Father, let not my call be vain, but grant me to desire what may please thee; and fulfil those desires for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

My resolutions, which God perfect, are,

1. To avoid loose thoughts.
2. To rise at eight every morning.

I hope to extend these purposes to other duties; but it is necessary to combat evil habits singly. I purpose to rise at eight, because, though I shall not yet rise early, it will be much earlier than I now rise, for I often lie till two, and will gain me much time, and tend to a conquest over idleness, and give time for other duties. I hope to rise yet earlier.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor desirest the death of a sinner, look down with mercy upon me, and grant that I may turn from my wickedness and live. Forgive the days and years which I have passed in folly, idleness, and sin. Fill me with such sorrow for the time mispent, that I may amend my life according to thy holy word; strengthen me against habitual idleness, and enable me to direct my thoughts to the performance of every duty; that while I live I may serve thee in the state to which thou shalt call me, and at last by a holy and happy death be delivered from the struggles and sorrows of this life, and obtain eternal happiness by thy mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, have mercy on me.

At church I purpose,

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Before I leave the pew, to pray the occasional prayer, and read my resolutions.

To pray for Tetty and the rest.

The like after communion.

At intervals to use the Collects of fourth after Trinity, and first and fourth after Epiphany, and to meditate.

This was done, as I purposed, but with some distraction. I came in at the Psalms, and could not well hear. I renewed my resolutions at the altar. God perfect them! Then I came home. I prayed, and have hope; grant, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, that my hope may not be vain.

I invited home with me the man whose pious behaviour I had for several years observed on this day, and found him a kind of Methodist, full of texts, but ill-instructed. I talked to him with temper, and offered him twice wine, which he refused. I suffered him to go without the dinner which I had purposed to give him. I thought this day that there was something irregular and particular in his look and gesture; but having intended to invite him to acquaintance, and having a fit opportunity by finding him near my own seat after I had missed him, I did what I at first designed, and am sorry to have been so much disappointed. Let me not be prejudiced hereafter against the appearance of piety in mean persons, who, with indeterminate notions, and perverse or inelegant conversation, perhaps, are doing all they can.

At night I used the occasional prayer, with proper Collects.

Before the Study of Law.

September 26, 1765.

ALMIGHTY God, the giver of wisdom, without whose help resolutions are vain, without whose blessing study is ineffectual, enable me, if it be thy will, to attain such knowledge as may qualify me to direct the doubtful, and instruct the ignorant, to prevent wrongs, and terminate

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contentions; and grant that I may use that knowledge which I shall attain, to thy glory and my own salvation, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Engaging in Politicks with H——n.

November, 1765.

ALMIGHTY God, who art the giver of all wisdom, enlighten my understanding with knowledge of right, and govern my will by thy laws, that no deceit may mislead me, nor temptation corrupt me; that I may always endeavour to do good, and to hinder evil. Amidst all the hopes and fears of this world, take not thy Holy Spirit from me; but grant that my thoughts may be fixed on Thee, and that I may finally attain everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

1766.

January 1, after 2 in the morning.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, I again appear in thy presence the wretched mispender of another year, which thy mercy has allowed me. O Lord, let me not sink into total depravity, look down upon me, and rescue me at last from the captivity of sin. Impart to me good resolutions, and give me strength and perseverance to perform them. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but grant that I may redeem the time lost, and that by temperance and diligence, by sincere repentance and faithful obedience, I may finally obtain everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Study.

Entering Novum Museum.

March 7.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast graciously supplied me with new conveniencies for study, grant that I may use thy gifts to thy glory. Forgive me

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the time mispent, relieve my perplexities, strengthen my resolution, and enable me to do my duty with vigour and constancy; and when the fears and hopes, the pains and pleasures of this life shall have an end, receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Transcribed, June 26, —68.

September 18, 1766, at Streatham.

I have this day completed my fifty-seventh year. O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake have mercy upon me.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast granted me to prolong my life to another year, look down upon me with pity. Let not my manifold sins and negligences avert from me thy fatherly regard. Enlighten my mind that I may know my duty; that I may perform it, strengthen my resolution. Let not another year be lost in vain deliberations; let me remember, that of the short life of man, a great part is already past in sinfulness and sloth. Deliver me, gracious Lord, from the bondage of evil customs, and take not from me thy Holy Spirit; but enable me so to spend my remaining days, that, by performing thy will, I may promote thy glory: and grant that after the troubles and disappointments of this mortal state, I may obtain everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Added,

The fourteenth S. after Tr.

The morning Collect.

The beginning of this (day) year.

Purposes.

To keep a journal. To begin this day.

To spend four hours every day in study, and as much more as I can.

To read a portion of the Scriptures in Greek, every Sunday.

To rise at eight.

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Oct. 3, —66. Of all this I have done nothing.

I returned from Streatham, Oct. 1 —66, having lived there more than three months.

1767.

January 1, Ima mane scripsi.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, in whose hand are life and death, as Thou hast suffered me to see the beginning of another year, grant, I beseech Thee, that another year may not be lost in idleness, or squandered in unprofitable employment. Let not sin prevail on the remaining part of life, and take not from me thy Holy Spirit; but as every day brings me nearer to my end, let every day contribute to make my end holy and happy. Enable me, O Lord, to use all enjoyments with due temperance, preserve me from unseasonable and immoderate sleep, and enable me to run with diligence the race that is set before me, that, after the troubles of this life, I may obtain everlasting happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

August 2, 1767.

I HAVE been disturbed and unsettled for a long time, and have been without resolution to apply to study or to business, being hindered by sudden snatches.

I have for some days forborn wine and suppers. Abstinencies not easily practised in another's house; but I think it fit to try.

I was extremely perturbed in the night, but have had this day more ease than I expected. D. gr. Perhaps this may be such a sudden relief as I once once had by a good night's rest in Fetter lane.

The shortness of the time which the common order of nature allows me to expect, is very frequently upon my mind. God grant that it may profit me.

August 17, 1767.

FROM that time, by abstinence, I have had more ease. I have read five books of Homer, and hope to

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end the sixth to-night. I have given Mrs. —— a guinea.

By abstinence from wine and suppers, I obtained sudden and great relief, and had freedom of mind restored to me, which I have wanted for all this year, without being able to find any means of obtaining it.

I am now about to receive, with my old friend Kitty Chambers, the sacrament, preparatory to her death. Grant, O God, that it may fit me. I purpose temperance for my resolution. O God, enable me to keep my purpose to thy glory.

5. 32. P. M.

I have communicated with Kitty, and kissed her. I was for some time distracted, but at last more composed. I commended my friends and Kitty. Lucy and I were much affected. Kitty is, I think going to heaven.

August 17, 1767.

O God, grant that I may practise such temperance in meat, drink, and sleep, and all bodily enjoyments, as may fit me for the duties to which Thou shalt call me, and by thy blessing procure me freedom of thought and quietness of mind, that I may so serve Thee in this short and frail life, that I may be received by Thee at my death to everlasting happiness. Take not, O Lord, thy Holy Spirit from me; deliver me not up to vain fears; but have mercy on me, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, who desirest not the death, &c.
O Lord, grant us increase —
O God, — pardon and peace —
O God, who knowest our necessities —
Our Father —

Sunday, Oct. 18, 1767.

YESTERDAY, Oct. 17, at about ten in the morning, I took leave for ever of my dear old friend Catherine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about

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1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother, and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old.

I desired all to withdraw, then told her that we were to part for ever; that as Christians, we should part with prayer; and that I would, if she was willing, say a short prayer beside her. She expressed great desire to hear me; and held up her poor hands, as she lay in bed, with great fervour, while I prayed kneeling by her, nearly in the following words:

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, whose loving-kindness is over all thy works, behold, visit, and relieve this thy servant, who is grieved with sickness. Grant that the sense of her weakness may add strength to her faith, and seriousness to her repentance. And grant that by the help of thy Holy Spirit, after the pains and labours of this short life, we may all obtain everlasting happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord: for whose sake hear our prayers. Amen. Our Father, &c.

I then kissed her. She told me that to part was the greatest pain that she had ever felt, and that she hoped we should meet again in a better place. I expressed, with swelled eyes, and great emotion of tenderness, the same hopes. We kissed, and parted. I humbly hope to meet again, and to part no more.

1768.

Bed-time.

Lent 2.

ALMIGHTY God, who seest that I have no power of myself to help myself; keep me both outwardly in my body, and inwardly in my soul, that I may be defended from all adversities that may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This prayer may be said before or after the entrance into bed, as a preparative for sleep.

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When I transcribed this prayer, it was my purpose to have made this book* a collection.

Study of Tongues.

ALMIGHTY God, giver of all knowledge, enable me so to pursue the study of tongues, that I may promote thy glory and my own salvation.

Bless my endeavours as shall seem best unto Thee; and if it shall please Thee to grant me the attainment of my purpose, preserve me from sinful pride; take not thy Holy Spirit from me, but give me a pure heart and humble mind, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Of this prayer there is no date, nor can I tell when it was written; but I think it was in Gough square, after the Dictionary was ended. I did not study what I then intended.

Transcribed June 26, 1768.

Townmalling, in Kent,
September 18, 1768, at night.

I HAVE now begun the sixtieth year of my life. How the last year has past, I am unwilling to terrify myself with thinking. This day has been past in great perturbation; I was distracted at church in an uncommon degree, and my distress has had very little intermission. I have found myself somewhat relieved by reading, which I, therefore, intend to practise when I am able.

This day it came into my mind to write the history of my melancholy. On this I purpose to deliberate; I know not whether it may not too much disturb me.

I this day read a great part of Pascal's life.

O Lord, who hast safely brought me, &c.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, Creator and Preserver of mankind, look down with pity upon my troubles

* A parchment-book containing such of these prayers as are marked *transcribed.*

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and maladies. Heal my body, strengthen my mind, compose my distraction, calm my inquietude, and relieve my terrours; that, if it please Thee, I may run the race that is set before me with peace, patience, constancy, and confidence. Grant this, O Lord, and take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but pardon and bless me, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

1769.

January 1.

I am now about to begin another year: how the last has past, it would be in my state of weakness, perhaps not prudent too solicitously to recollect. God will, I hope, turn my sufferings to my benefit, forgive me whatever I have done amiss, and having vouchsafed me great relief, will, by degrees, heal and restore both my mind and body; and permit me, when the last year of my life shall come, to leave the world in holiness and tranquillity.

I am not yet in a state to form many resolutions; I purpose, and hope to rise early in the morning, at eight, and by degrees at six; eight being the latest hour to which bed-time can be properly extended; and six the earliest that the present system of life requires.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast continued my life from year to year, grant that by longer life I may become less desirous of sinful pleasures, and more careful of eternal happiness. As age comes upon me, let my mind be more withdrawn from vanity and folly, more enlightened with the knowledge of thy will, and more invigorated with resolution to obey it. O Lord, calm my thoughts, direct my desires, and fortify my purposes. If it shall please Thee, give quiet to my latter days, and so support me with thy grace, that I may die in thy favour, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Safely brought us to the beginning of this year, &c.

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September 18, 1769.

THIS day completes the sixtieth year of my age. What I have done, and what I have left undone, the unsettled state of my mind makes all endeavours to think improper. I hope to survey my life with more tranquillity, in some part of the time which God shall grant me.

The last year has been wholly spent in a slow progress of recovery. My days are easier, but the perturbation of my nights is very distressful. I think to try a lower diet. I have grown fat too fast. My lungs seem encumbered, and my breath fails me, if my strength is in any unusual degree exerted, or my motion accelerated. I seem to myself to bear exercise with more difficulty than in the last winter. But though I feel all those decays of body, I have made no preparation for the grave. What shall I do to be saved?

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, I now appear in thy presence, laden with the sins, and accountable for the mercies of another year. Glory be to Thee, O God, for the mitigation of my troubles, and for the hope of health both of mind and body which Thou hast vouchsafed me. Most merciful Lord, if it seem good unto Thee, compose my mind, and relieve my diseases; enable me to perform the duties of my station, and so to serve Thee, as that, when my hour of departure from this painful life shall be delayed no longer, I may be received to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O LORD, without whose help all the purposes of man are vain, enable me to use such temperance as may heal my body, and strengthen my mind, and enable me to serve Thee. Grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Who hast safely brought me, &c.

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September 19, 1769.

YESTERDAY, having risen from a disturbed and wearisome night, I was not much at rest the whole day. I prayed with the collect, *to the beginning*, in the night and in the morning. At night I composed my prayer, and wrote my reflection. Reviewing them, I found them both weakly conceived and imperfectly expressed, and corrected the prayer this morning. I am glad that I have not omitted my annual practice. I hope that by rigid temperance, and moderate exercise, I may yet recover. I used the prayer again at night, and am now to begin, by the permission of God, my sixty-first year.

November 5, 1769.

ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, whose providence is over all thy works, look down with pity upon the diseases of my body, and the perturbations of my mind. Give thy blessing, O Lord, to the means which I shall use for my relief, and restore ease to my body, and quiet to my thoughts. Let not my remaining life be made useless by infirmities; neither let health, if Thou shalt grant it, be employed by me in disobedience to thy laws; but give me such a sense of my pains as may humble me before Thee; and such remembrance of thy mercy as may produce honest industry, and holy confidence. And, O Lord, whether Thou ordainest my days to be past in ease or anguish, take not from me thy Holy Spirit; but grant that I may attain everlasting life, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This I found January 11, 1772; and believe it written when I began to live on milk. I grew worse with forbearance of solid food.

1770.

January 1, prima mane.

ALMIGHTY God, by whose mercy I am permitted to behold the beginning of another year, succour with thy

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help, and bless with thy favour, the creature whom Thou vouchsafest to preserve. Mitigate, if it shall seem best unto Thee, the diseases of my body, and compose the disorders of my mind. Dispel my terrours; and grant, that the time which Thou shalt yet allow me, may not pass unprofitably away. Let not pleasure seduce me, idleness lull me, or misery depress me. Let me perform to thy glory, and the good of my fellow creatures, the work which thou shalt yet appoint me; and grant, that as I draw nearer to my dissolution, I may, by the help of thy Holy Spirit, feel my knowledge of Thee increased, my hope exalted, and my faith strengthened; that, when the hour which is coming shall come, I may pass by a holy death to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wednesday, March 28, 1770.

THIS is the day on which, in 1752, I was deprived of poor dear Tetty. Having left off the practice of thinking on her with some particular combinations, I have recalled her to my mind of late less frequently; but when I recollect the time in which we lived together, my grief for her departure is not abated; and I have less pleasure in any good that befalls me, because she does not partake it. On many occasions, I think what she would have said or done. When I saw the sea at Brighthelmstone, I wished for her to have seen it with me. But with respect to her, no rational wish is now left, but that we may meet at last where the mercy of God shall make us happy, and perhaps make us instrumental to the happiness of each other. It is now eighteen years.

April 14, 1770.

THIS week is Passion Week.

I have for some weeks past been much afflicted with the lumbago, or rheumatism in the loins, which often passes to the muscles of the belly, where it causes equal, if not greater pain. In the day the sunshine mitigates it;

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and in cold or cloudy weather, such as has for some time past remarkably prevailed, the heat of a strong fire suspends it. In the night it is so troublesome, as not very easily to be borne. I lie wrapped in flannel, with a very great fire near my bed; but whether it be that a recumbent posture increases the pain, or that expansion by moderate warmth excites what a great heat dissipates, I can seldom remain in bed two hours at a time without the necessity of rising to heat the parts affected at the fire.

One night, between the pain and the spasms in my stomach, I was insupportably distressed. On the next night, I think, I laid a blister to my back, and took opium; my night was tolerable, and, from that time, the spasms in my stomach, which disturbed me for many years, and for two past harassed me almost to distraction, have nearly ceased; I suppose the breast is relaxed by the opium.

Having passed Thursday in Passion Week at Mr Thrale's, I came home on Friday morning, that I might pass the day unobserved; I had nothing but water, once in the morning, and once at bed-time. I refused tea, after some deliberation, in the afternoon. They did not press it. I came home late, and was unwilling to carry my rheumatism to the cold church in the morning, unless that were rather an excuse made to myself. In the afternoon I went to church, but came late, I think at the Creed. I read Clarke's Sermon on the death of Christ, and the Second Epistle to Timothy in Greek, but rather hastily. I then went to Thrale's, and had a very tedious and painful night. But the spasms in my throat are gone; and, if either the pain, or the opiate which the pain enforced, has stopped them, the relief is very cheaply purchased. The pain harasses me much; yet many have the disease, perhaps, in a much higher degree, with want of food, fire, and covering, which I find thus grievous, with all the succours that riches and kindness can buy and give.

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On Saturday I was not hungry, and did not eat much breakfast. There was a dinner and company, at which I was persuaded or tempted to stay. At night I came home, sat up, and composed the Prayer; and having ordered the maid to make the fire in my chamber, at eight went to rest, and had a tolerable night.

Easter Day.

April 15, 1770, in the morning.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast preserved me, by thy fatherly care, through all the years of my past life, and now permittest me again to commemorate the sufferings and merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; grant me so to partake of this Holy Rite, that the disquiet of my mind may be appeased, that my faith may be increased, my hope strengthened, and my life regulated by thy will. Make me truly thankful for that portion of health which thy mercy has restored, and enable me to use the remains of life to thy glory and my own salvation. Take not from me, O Lord, thy Holy Spirit; extinguish in my mind all sinful and inordinate desires; let me resolve to do that which is right; and let me, by thy help, keep my resolutions. Let me, if it be best for me, at last know peace and comfort; but whatever state of life Thou shalt appoint me, let me end it by a happy death, and enjoy eternal happiness in thy presence, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Easter Day.

1 in the afternoon.

I AM just returned from the communion, having been very little interrupted in my duty by bodily pain.

I was very early at church, and used this Prayer, I think, before service, with proper Collects. I was composed during the service. I went to the table to hear the prefatory part of the office, then returned to my pew, and tried to settle some resolutions.

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I resolved to form, this day, some plan for reading the Scriptures.

To rise by eight, or earlier.

To form a plan for the regulation of my daily life.

To excite in myself such a fervent desire of pleasing God, as should suppress all other passions.

I prayed through all the collects of meditation, with some extemporary prayers; recommended my friends, living and dead. When I returned to the table, I staid till most had communicated, and in the mean time tried to settle my mind; prayed against bad and troublesome thoughts; resolved to oppose sudden incursions of them; and, I think, had ——— thrown into my mind at the general confession. When I went first to the table, the particular series of my thoughts I cannot recollect.

When I came home, I returned thanks, by accommodating the General Thanksgiving; and used this Prayer again, with the Collects, after receiving. I hope God has heard me.

Shall I ever receive the Sacrament with tranquillity? Surely the time will come.

Some vain thoughts stole upon me while I stood near the table: I hope I ejected them effectually, so as not to be hurt by them.

I went to prayers at seven, having fasted; read the two Morning Lessons in Greek. At night I read Clarke's Sermon of the Humiliation of our Saviour.

1 Sunday after Easter.

I HAVE been recovering from my rheumatism slowly, yet sensibly; but the last week has produced little good. Uneasy nights have tempted me to lie long in the morning. But when I wake in the night, the release which still continues from the spasms in my throat, gives me great comfort.

The plan which I formed for reading the Scriptures, was to read 600 verses in the Old Testament, and 200 in the New, every week.

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The Old Testament in any language, the New in Greek.

This day I began to read the Septuagint, but read only 230 verses, the nine first chapters of Genesis.

On this evening I repeated the Prayer for Easter Day, changing the future tense for the past.

June 1, 1770.

EVERY man naturally persuades himself that he can keep his resolutions, nor is he convinced of his imbecility but by length of time, and frequency of experiment. This opinion of our own constancy is so prevalent, that we always despise him who suffers his general and settled purpose to be overpowered by an occasional desire. They, therefore, whom frequent failures have made desperate, cease to form resolutions; and they who are becoming cunning, do not tell them. Those who do not make them are very few, but of their effect little is perceived; for scarcely any man persists in a course of life planned by choice, but as he is restrained from deviation by some external power. He who may live as he will, seldom lives long in the observation of his own rules. I never yet saw a regular family, unless it were that of Mrs. Harriot's, nor a regular man, except Mr. ———, whose exactness I know only by his own report, and Psalmanazar, whose life was, I think, uniform.

1771.

Easter Day.

March 31.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, I am now about to commemorate once more, in thy presence, the redemption of the world by our Lord and Saviour, thy Son Jesus Christ. Grant, O most merciful God, that the benefit of his sufferings may be extended to me. Grant me faith, grant me repentance. Illuminate me with thy Holy Spirit, enable me to form good purposes, and to bring

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these purposes to good effect. Let me so dispose my time, that I may discharge the duties to which Thou shalt vouchsafe to call me; and let that degree of health, to which thy mercy has restored me, be employed to thy glory. O God, invigorate my understanding, compose my perturbations, recall my wanderings, and calm my thoughts; that having lived while Thou shalt grant me life, to do good and to praise Thee, I may, when thy call shall summon me to another state, receive mercy from Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Sept. 18, 1771, 9 at night.

I AM now come to my sixty-third year. For the last year I have been slowly recovering both from the violence of my last illness, and, I think, from the general disease of my life. My breath is less obstructed, and I am more capable of motion and exercise. My mind is less encumbered, and I am less interrupted in mental employment. Some advances, I hope, have been made towards regularity. I have missed church since Easter only two Sundays, both which, I hope, I have endeavoured to supply by attendance on divine worship in the following week. Since Easter, my evening devotions have been lengthened. But indolence and indifference has been neither conquered or opposed. No plan of study has been pursued or formed, except that I have commonly read every week, if not on Sunday, a stated portion of the New Testament in Greek. But what is most to be considered, I have neither attempted nor formed any scheme of life by which I may do good, and please God.

One great hindrance is want of rest; my nocturnal complaints grow less troublesome towards morning; and I am tempted to repair the deficiencies of the night. I think, however, to try to rise every day by eight, and to combat indolence as I shall obtain strength. Perhaps Providence has yet some use for the remnant of my life.

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ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, whose mercy is over all thy works, and who hast no pleasure in the death of a sinner, look with pity upon me, succour and preserve me; enable me to conquer evil habits, and surmount temptations. Give me grace so to use the degree of health which Thou hast restored to my mind and body, that I may perform the task Thou shalt yet appoint me. Look down, O gracious Lord, upon my remaining part of life; grant, if it please Thee, that the days, few or many, which Thou shalt yet allow me, may pass in reasonable confidence, and holy tranquillity. Withhold not thy Holy Spirit from me, but strengthen all good purposes, till they shall produce a life pleasing to Thee. And when Thou shalt call me to another state, forgive me my sins, and receive me to happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Safely brought us, &c.

Sept. 28, 1771.

On the 18th, in the morning, before I went to bed, I used the general prayer [" beginning of this year"] and when I rose. I came home from Mr. Thrale's that I might be more master of my hours. I went to church in the morning, but came in to the Litany. I have gone voluntarily to church on the week days but few times in my life. I think to mend.

At night I composed and used the prayer, which I have used since in my devotions one morning. Having been somewhat disturbed, I have not yet settled in any plan, except that yesterday I began to learn some verses in the Greek Testament for a Sunday's recital. I hope, by trust in God, to amend my life.

1772.

Jan. 1, 2 in the morning.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast permitted me to see the beginning of another year, enable me so to receive thy mercy, as that it may raise in me stronger desires of

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pleasing Thee by purity of mind and holiness of life. Strengthen me, O Lord, in good purposes, and reasonable meditations. Look with pity upon all my disorders of mind, and infirmities of body. Grant that the residue of my life may enjoy such degrees of health as may permit me to be useful, and that I may live to thy glory; and, O merciful Lord, when it shall please Thee to call me from the present state, enable me to die in confidence of thy mercy, and receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

To rise in the morning.

Easter Eve.

April 18, 1772.

I AM now again preparing, by divine mercy, to commemorate the death of my gracious Redeemer, and to form, as God shall enable me, resolutions and purposes of a better life.

When I review the last year, I am able to recollect so little done, that shame and sorrow, though perhaps too weakly, come upon me; yet I have been generally free from local pain, and my strength has seemed gradually to increase. But my sleep has generally been unquiet, and I have not been able to rise early. My mind is unsettled, and my memory confused. I have of late turned my thoughts, with a very useless earnestness, upon past incidents. I have yet got no command over my thoughts; an unpleasing incident is almost certain to hinder my rest; this is the remainder of my last illness. By sleepless or unquiet nights, and short days, made short by late rising, the time passes away uncounted and unheeded. Life so spent is useless.

I hope to cast my time into some stated method.

To let no hour pass unemployed.

To rise by degrees more early in the morning.

To keep a journal.

I have, I think, been less guilty of neglecting publick worship than formerly. I have commonly on Sunday gone

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once to church, and if I have missed, have reproached myself.

I have exerted rather more activity of body. These dispositions I desire to improve.

I resolved, last Easter, to read within the year, the whole Bible, a very great part of which I had never looked upon. I read the Greek Testament without construing, and this day concluded the Apocalypse. I think that no part was missed.

My purpose of reading the rest of the Bible was forgotten, till I took by chance the resolutions of last Easter in my hand.

I began it the first day of Lent; and, for a time, read with some regularity. I was then disturbed or seduced, but finished the Old Testament last Thursday.

I hope to read the whole Bible once a year, as long as I live.

Yesterday I fasted, as I have always or commonly done since the death of Tetty. The fast was more painful than it has formerly been, which I imputed to some medicinal evacuations in the beginning of the week, and to a meal of cakes on the foregoing day. I cannot now fast as formerly.

I devoted this week to the perusal of the Bible, and have done little secular business. I am this night easier than is customary on this anniversary, but am not sensibly enlightened.

Easter Day.

After 12 at night.

THE day is now begun, on which I hope to begin a new course ὥσπερ ἀφ' ὑσπλήγγων.

My hopes are from this time,

To rise early.
To waste less time.
To appropriate something to charity.

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Easter.

ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, who hatest nothing that Thou hast made, look down with pity upon my sinfulness and weakness. Strengthen, O Lord, my mind; deliver me from needless terrours; enable me to correct all inordinate desires, to eject all evil thoughts, to reform all sinful habits, and so to amend my life, that when at the end of my days Thou shalt call me hence, I may depart in peace, and be received into everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

9 in the morning.

GLORY be to Thee, O Lord God, for the deliverance which Thou hast granted me from diseases of mind and body. Grant, O gracious God, that I may employ the powers which Thou vouchsafest me to thy glory, and the salvation of my soul, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

April 26, 1772.

I WAS some way hindered from continuing this contemplation in the usual manner, and therefore try, at the distance of a week, to review the last Sunday. I went to church early, having first, I think, used my prayer. When I was there, I had very little perturbation of mind. During the usual time of meditation, I considered the Christian duties under the three principles of soberness, righteousness, and godliness; and purposed to forward godliness by the *annual perusal of the Bible;* righteousness *by settling something for charity,* and soberness *by early hours.* I commended as usual, with preface of permission, and, I think, mentioned Bathurst. I came home, and found Paoli and Boswell waiting for me. What devotions I used after my return home, I do not distinctly remember. I went to prayers in the evening; and, I think, entered late.

I have this week endeavoured every day but one, to rise

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early, and have tried to be diligent; but have not performed what I required from myself.

On Good Friday, I paid Peyton without requiring work.

Since Easter 1771, I have added a Collect to my evening devotion.

I have been less indulgent to corporeal inactivity. But have done little with my mind.

It is a comfort to me, that at last, in my sixty-third year, I have attained to know, even thus hastily, confusedly, and imperfectly, what my Bible contains.

May the good God increase and sanctify my knowledge.

I have never yet read the Apocrypha. When I was a boy, I have read or heard of Bel and the Dragon, Susanna, some of Tobit, perhaps all; some at least of Judith, and some of Ecclesiasticus; and, I suppose, the Benedicite. I have some time looked into the Maccabees, and read a chapter containing the question, *Which is the strongest?*[a] I think in Esdras.

In the afternoon of Easter Day, I read Pococke's Commentary.

I have this last week scarcely tried to read, nor have I read any thing this day.

I have had my mind weak and disturbed for some weeks past.

Having missed church in the morning, I went this evening, and afterwards sat with Southwell.

Having not used the prayer, except on the day of communion; I will offer it this night, and hope to find mercy. On this day little has been done, and this is now the last hour. In life little has been done, and life is very far advanced. Lord have mercy upon me.

1773.

January 1, mane 1h. 33m.

ALMIGHTY God, by whose mercy my life has been yet prolonged to another year, grant that thy mercy may not

[a] 1 Esdras, chap. iii. ver. 10, &c.

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be vain. Let not my years be multiplied to increase my guilt; but as age advances, let me become more pure in my thoughts, more regular in my desires, and more obedient to thy laws. Let not the cares of the world distract me, nor the evils of age overwhelm me. But continue and increase thy loving kindness towards me; and when Thou shalt call me hence, receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Good Friday.

April 9.

On this day I went twice to church, and Boswell was with me. I had forborn to attend divine service for some time in the winter, having a cough which would have interrupted both my own attention and that of others; and when the cough grew less troublesome I did not regain the habit of going to church, though I did not wholly omit it. I found the service not burdensome nor tedious, though I could not hear the lessons. I hope in time to take pleasure in publick worship.

On this whole day I took nothing of nourishment but one cup of tea without milk; but the fast was very inconvenient. Towards night I grew fretful and impatient, unable to fix my mind, or govern my thoughts; and felt a very uneasy sensation both in my stomach and head, compounded, as it seemed, of laxity and pains.

From this uneasiness, of which when I was not asleep I was sensible all night, I was relieved in the morning by drinking tea, and eating the soft part of a penny loaf.

This I have set down for future observation.

Saturday, April 10. I dined on cakes, and found myself filled and satisfied.

Saturday, 10. Having offered my prayers to God, I will now review the last year.

Of the spring and summer, I remember that I was able in those seasons to examine and improve my Dictionary, and was seldom withheld from the work but by my

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own unwillingness. Of my nights I have no distinct remembrance, but believe that, as in many foregoing years, they were painful and restless.

O God, grant that I may not mispend or lose the time which Thou shalt yet allow me. For Jesus Christ's sake have mercy upon me.

My purpose is to attain, in the remaining part of the year, as much knowledge as can easily be had of the Gospels and Pentateuch. Concerning the Hebrew I am in doubt. I hope likewise to enlarge my knowledge of divinity, by reading, at least once a week, some sermon, or small theological tract, or some portion of a larger work.

To this important and extensive study, my purpose is to appropriate (libere) part of every Sunday, holiday, Wednesday, and Friday, and to begin with the Gospels. Perhaps I may not be able to study the Pentateuch before next year.

My general resolution, to which I humbly implore the help of God, is to methodize my life, to resist sloth. I hope from this time to keep a journal.

N. B. On Friday I read the first of Mark, and Clarke's Sermon on Faith.

On Saturday I read little, but wrote the foregoing account, and the following prayer.

April 10, near midnight.

ALMIGHTY God, by whose mercy I am now about to commemorate the death of my Redeemer, grant that from this time I may so live, as that his death may be efficacious to my eternal happiness; enable me to conquer all evil customs; deliver me from evil and vexatious thoughts; grant me light to discover my duty, and grace to perform it. As my life advances, let me become more pure, and more holy. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but grant that I may serve Thee with diligence and confidence; and when Thou shalt call me hence, receive me to

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everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Easter Sunday.

April 11, 1773.

I HAD more disturbance in the night than has been customary for some weeks past. I rose before nine in the morning, and prayed and drank tea. I came, I think, to church in the beginning of the prayers. I did not distinctly hear the Psalms, and found that I had been reading the Psalms for Good Friday. I went through the Litany, after a short disturbance, with tolerable attention.

After sermon, I perused my Prayer in the pew, then went nearer the altar, and being introduced into another pew, used my Prayer again, and recommended my relations, with Bathurst and Boothby, then my wife again by herself. Then I went nearer the altar, and read the Collects chosen for meditation. I prayed for Salisbury, and, I think, for the Thrales. I then communicated with calmness, used the Collect for Easter Day, and returning to the first pew, prayed my Prayer the third time. I came home; again used my Prayer and the Easter Collect. Then went into the study to Boswell, and read the Greek Testament. Then dined, and when Boswell went away, ended the four first chapters of St. Matthew, and the Beatitudes of the fifth.

I then went to Evening Prayers, and was composed.

I gave the pew-keepers each five shillings and threepence.

April 12, near one in the morning. I used my Prayer, with my ordinary devotions, and hope to lead henceforward a better life.

Friday, June 18, 1773.

THIS day, after dinner, died Mrs. Salisbury; she had for some days almost lost the power of speaking. Yesterday, as I touched her hand, and kissed it, she pressed

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my hand between her two hands, which she probably intended as the parting caress. At night her speech returned a little; and she said, among other things, to her daughter, I have had much time, and, I hope, I have used it. This morning being called about nine to feel her pulse, I said, at parting, God bless you, for Jesus Christ's sake. She smiled, as pleased. She had her senses perhaps to the dying moment.

July 22, —73.

THIS day I found this book,[b] with the resolutions; some of which I had forgotten, but remembered my design of reading the Pentateuch and Gospels, though I have not pursued it.

Of the time past since these resolutions were made, I can give no very laudable account. Between Easter and Whitsuntide, having always considered that time as propitious to study, I attempted to learn the low Dutch language; my application was very slight, and my memory very fallacious, though whether more than in my earlier years, I am not very certain. My progress was interrupted by a fever, which, by the imprudent use of a small print, left an inflammation in my useful eye, which was not removed but by two copious bleedings, and the daily use of catharticks for a long time. The effect yet remains.

My memory has been for a long time very much confused. Names, and persons, and events, slide away strangely from me. But I grow easier.

The other day looking over old papers, I perceived a resolution to rise early always occurring. I think I was ashamed, or grieved, to find how long and how often I had resolved, what yet, except for about one half year, I have never done. My nights are now such as give me no quiet rest; whether I have not lived resolving

[b] A Book, in which this, and the preceding Meditations on Good Friday and Easter Sunday are written.

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till the possibility of performance is past, I know not. God help me, I will yet try.

Talisker in Sky,
Sept. 24, 1773.

On last Saturday was my sixty-fourth birthday. I might perhaps have forgotten it, had not Boswell told me of it; and, what pleased me less, told the family at Dunvegan.

The last year is added to those of which little use has been made. I tried in the summer to learn Dutch, and was interrupted by an inflammation in my eye. I set out in August on this journey to Sky. I find my memory uncertain, but hope it is only by a life immethodical and scattered. Of my body, I do not perceive that exercise, or change of air, has yet either increased the strength or activity. My nights are still disturbed by flatulencies.

My hope is, for resolution I dare no longer call it, to divide my time regularly, and to keep such a journal of my time, as may give me comfort in reviewing it. But, when I consider my age, and the broken state of my body, I have great reason to fear lest death should lay hold upon me, while I am yet only designing to live. But I have yet hope.

Almighty God, most merciful Father, look down upon me with pity. Thou hast protected me in childhood and youth; support me, Lord, in my declining years. Preserve me from the dangers of sinful presumption. Give me, if it be best for me, stability of purposes, and tranquillity of mind. Let the year which I have now begun be spent to thy glory, and to the furtherance of my salvation. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but as death approaches, prepare me to appear joyfully in thy presence, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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1774.

January 1, near 2 in the morning.

ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, who hatest nothing that Thou hast made, but wouldest that all should be saved, have mercy upon me. As Thou hast extended my life, increase my strength, direct my purposes, and confirm my resolution, that I may truly serve Thee, and perform the duties which Thou shalt allot me.

Relieve, O gracious Lord, according to thy mercy, the pains and distempers of my body, and appease the tumults of my mind. Let my faith and obedience increase as my life advances; and let the approach of death incite my desire to please Thee, and invigorate my diligence in good works, till at last, when thou shalt call me to another state, I shall lie down in humble hope, supported by thy Holy Spirit, and be received to everlasting happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The beginning, &c.

I hope,

To read the Gospels before Easter.

To rise at eight.

To be temperate in food.

THIS year has passed with so little improvement, that I doubt whether I have not rather impaired than increased my learning. To this omission, some external causes have contributed. In the winter I was distressed by a cough; in the summer an inflammation fell upon my useful eye, from which it has not yet, I fear, recovered; in the autumn I took a journey to the Hebrides, but my mind was not free from perturbation: yet the chief cause of my deficiency has been a life immethodical and unsettled, which breaks all purposes, confounds and suppresses memory, and, perhaps, leaves too much leisure to imagination. O Lord have mercy upon me.

January 9, 1774.

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1775.

Maunday Thursday, April 13.

OF the use of time, or of my commendation of myself, I thought no more; but lost life in restless nights and broken days, till this week awakened my attention.

This year has passed with very little improvement, perhaps with diminution of knowledge. Much time I have not left; infirmities oppress me. But much remains to be done. I hope to rise at eight, or sooner in the morning.

Good Friday, April 14, 1775.

BOSWELL came in before I was up. We breakfasted; I only drank tea, without milk or bread. We went to church, saw Dr. Wetherel in the pew, and, by his desire, took him home with us. He did not go very soon, and Boswell staid. Boswell and I went to church, but came very late. We then took tea, by Boswell's desire; and I eat one bunn, I think, that I might not seem to fast ostentatiously. Boswell sat with me till night; we had some serious talk. When he went, I gave Francis some directions for preparation to communicate. Thus has passed, hitherto, this awful day.

10° 30'. P. M.

WHEN I look back upon resolutions of improvement and amendment, which have year after year been made and broken, either by negligence, forgetfulness, vitious idleness, casual interruption, or morbid infirmity; when I find that so much of my life has stolen unprofitably away, and that I can descry by retrospection scarcely a few single days properly and vigorously employed; why do I yet try to resolve again? I try, because reformation is necessary, and despair is criminal; I try, in humble hope of the help of God.

As my life has, from my earliest years, been wasted in a

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morning bed, my purpose is from Easter day to rise early, not later than eight.

11h 15′. P. M. D. J.
Easter Eve, April 15, 1775.

I ROSE more early than is common, after a night disturbed by flatulencies, though I had taken so little. I prayed, but my mind was unsettled, and I did not fix upon the book. After the bread and tea I trifled, and about three ordered coffee and bunns for my dinner. I find more faintness and uneasiness in fasting than I did formerly.

While coffee was preparing, Collier came in, a man whom I had not seen for more than twenty years, but whom I consulted about Macky's books. We talked of old friends and past occurrences, and eat and drank together.

I then read a little in the Testament, and tried Fiddes's Body of Divinity, but did not settle.

I then went to evening prayer, and was tolerably composed. At my return I sat awhile, then retired, but found reading uneasy.

11 P. M.

These two days in which I fasted, I have not been sleepy, though I rested ill.

Easter Day.

April 16, 1775.

ALMIGHTY God, heavenly Father, whose mercy is over all thy works, look with pity on my miseries and sins. Suffer me to commemorate, in thy presence, my redemption by thy Son Jesus Christ. Enable me so to repent of my mispent time, that I may pass the residue of my life in thy fear, and to thy glory. Relieve, O Lord, as seemeth best unto Thee, the infirmities of my body, and the perturbation of my mind. Fill my thoughts with awful love of thy goodness, with just fear of thine anger, and with humble confidence in thy mercy. Let me study thy

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laws, and labour in the duties which Thou shalt set before me. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but incite in me such good desires, as may produce diligent endeavours after thy glory and my own salvation; and when, after hopes and fears, and joys and sorrows, Thou shalt call me hence, receive me to eternal happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collier is dead. April 7, 1776.

Transcribed from a former book, with a slight emendation or two. With that book I parted, perhaps unnecessarily, by a catch.

September 18, 1775.

O GOD, by whom all things were created and are sustained, who givest and takest away, in whose hands are life and death, accept my imperfect thanks for the length of days which Thou hast vouchsafed to grant me; impress upon my mind such repentance of the time mispent in sinfulness and negligence, that I may obtain forgiveness of all my offences; and so calm my mind, and strengthen my resolutions, that I may live the remaining part of my life in thy fear, and with thy favour. Take not thy Holy Spirit from me; but let me so love thy laws, and so obey them, that I may finally be received to eternal happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Composed at Calais, in a sleepless night, and used before the morn at Notre Dame. Written at St. Omer's.

1776.

January 1.

ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, who hast permitted me to see the beginning of another year, grant that the time which Thou shalt yet afford me, may be spent in thy glory, and the salvation of my own soul. Strengthen all good resolutions, and take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but have mercy upon me, and shed thy blessing both on my soul and body, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Easter Day.

April 7.

THE time is again at which, since the death of my poor dear Tetty, on whom God have mercy, I have annually commemorated the mystery of redemption, and annually purposed to amend my life. My reigning sin, to which perhaps many others are dependent, is waste of time, and general sluggishness, to which I was always inclined, and, in part of my life, have been almost compelled by morbid melancholy and disturbance of mind. Melancholy has had in me its paroxysms and remissions, but I have not improved the intervals, nor sufficiently resisted my natural inclination, or sickly habits. I will resolve, henceforth, to rise at eight in the morning, so far as resolution is proper, and will pray that God will strengthen me. I have begun this morning.

Though for the past week I have had an anxious design of communicating to day, I performed no particular act of devotion, till on Friday I went to church. My design was to pass part of the day in exercises of piety, but Mr. Boswell interrupted me; of him, however, I could have rid myself, but poor Thrale, *orbus et exspes*, came for comfort, and sat till seven, when we all went to church.

In the morning I had at church some radiations of comfort.

I fasted, though less rigorously than at other times. I, by negligence, poured milk into the tea, and, in the afternoon, drank one dish of coffee with Thrale; yet at night, after a fit of drowsiness, I felt myself very much disordered by emptiness, and called for tea, with peevish and impatient eagerness. My distress was very great.

Yesterday, I do not recollect that to go to church came into my thoughts; but I sat in my chamber, preparing for preparation: interrupted I know not how. I was near two hours at dinner.

I go now with hope,

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To rise in the morning at eight.
To use my remaining time with diligence.
To study more accurately the Christian religion.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast preserved me, by thy tender forbearance, once more to commemorate thy love in the redemption of the world; grant that I may so live the residue of my days, as to obtain thy mercy when Thou shalt call me from the present state. Illuminate my thoughts with knowledge, and inflame my heart with holy desires. Grant me to resolve well, and keep my resolutions; take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but in life and in death have mercy on me, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Acts of forgiveness.

P. M. In the pew I read my prayer, and commended my friends, and those that died this year. At the altar I was generally attentive; some thoughts of vanity came into my mind, while others were communicating; but I found, when I considered them, that they did not tend to irreverence of God. At the altar I renewed my resolutions. When I received, some tender images struck me. I was so mollified by the concluding address to our Saviour, that I could not utter it. The communicants were mostly women. At intervals I read collects, and recollected, as I could, my prayer. Since my return, I have said it. 2 P. M.

May 21, 1776.

These resolutions I have not practised nor recollected. O God, grant me to begin now, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

July 25, 1776.

O GOD, who hast ordained that whatever is to be desired, should be sought by labour, and who, by thy blessing bringest honest labour to good effect; look with mercy upon my studies and endeavours. Grant me, O Lord, to design only what is lawful and right; and afford me

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calmness of mind, and steadiness of purpose, that I may so do thy will in this short life, as to obtain happiness in the world to come, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

When I purposed to apply vigorously to study, particularly of the Greek and Italian tongues.

1777.

January 1, 2 P. M.

ALMIGHTY Lord, merciful Father, vouchsafe to accept the thanks which I now presume to offer Thee, for the prolongation of my life. Grant, O Lord, that as my days are multiplied, my good resolutions may be strengthened, my power of resisting temptations increased, and my struggles with snares and obstructions invigorated. Relieve the infirmities both of my mind and body. Grant me such strength as my duties may require, and such diligence as may improve those opportunities of good that shall be offered me. Deliver me from the intrusion of evil thoughts. Grant me true repentance of my past life; and as I draw nearer and nearer to the grave, strengthen my faith, enliven my hope, extend my charity, and purify my desires; and so help me by thy Holy Spirit, that when it shall be thy pleasure to call me hence, I may be received to everlasting happiness, for the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father—

March 28.

THIS day is Good Friday. It is likewise the day on which my poor Tetty was taken from me.

My thoughts were disturbed in bed. I remembered that it was my wife's dying day, and begged pardon for all our sins, and commended her; but resolved to mix little of my own sorrows or cares with the great solemnity. Having taken only tea without milk, I went to church; had time, before service, to commend my wife, and wished to join quietly in the service, but I did not

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hear well, and my mind grew unsettled and perplexed. Having rested ill in the night, I slumbered at the sermon, which, I think, I could not, as I sat, perfectly hear.

I returned home, but could not settle my mind. At last I read a chapter. Then went down, about six or seven, and eat two cross-bunns, and drank tea. Fasting for some time has been uneasy, and I have taken but little.

At night I had some ease. L. D. I had prayed for pardon and peace.

I slept in the afternoon.

29, Easter Eve.

I ROSE, and again prayed, with reference to my departed wife. I neither read nor went to church, yet can scarcely tell how I have been hindered. I treated with booksellers on a bargain, but the time was not long.

30, Easter Day, 1ma mane.

THE day is now come again, in which by a custom which since the death of my wife I have by the divine assistance always observed, I am to renew the great covenant with my Maker and my Judge. I humbly hope to perform it better. I hope more efficacy of resolution, and more diligence of endeavour. When I survey my past life, I discover nothing but a barren waste of time, with some disorders of body, and disturbances of the mind very near to madness, which I hope He that made me, will suffer to extenuate many faults, and excuse many deficiencies. Yet much remains to be repented and reformed. I hope that I refer more to God than in former times, and consider more what submission is due to his dispensations. But I have very little reformed my practical life; and the time in which I can struggle with habits cannot be now expected to be long. Grant, O God, that I may no longer resolve in vain, or dream away the life which thy indulgence gives me, in vacancy and uselessness.

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9na mane.

I WENT to bed about two, had a disturbed night, though not so distressful as at some other times.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who seest all our miseries, and knowest all our necessities, look down upon me, and pity me. Defend me from the violent incursions of evil thoughts, and enable me to form and keep such resolutions as may conduce to the discharge of the duties which thy providence shall appoint me; and so help me by thy Holy Spirit, that my heart may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found, and that I may serve Thee with pure affection and a cheerful mind. Have mercy upon me, O God, have mercy upon me; years and infirmities oppress me, terrour and anxiety beset me. Have mercy upon me, my Creator and my Judge. In all dangers protect me, in all perplexities relieve and free me, and so help me by thy Holy Spirit, that I may now so commemorate the death of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, as that when this short and painful life shall have an end, I may, for his sake, be received to everlasting happiness. Amen.

April 6, 1777.

BY one strange hindrance or another, I have been withheld from the continuation of my thoughts to this day, the Sunday following Easter-day.

On Easter-day I was at church early, and there prayed over my prayer, and commended Tetty and my other friends. I was for some time much distressed, but at last obtained, I hope, from the God of peace, more quiet than I have enjoyed for a long time. I had made no resolution, but as my heart grew lighter, my hopes revived, and my courage increased; and I wrote with my pencil in my Common Prayer Book,

Vita ordinanda.
Biblia legenda.

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Theologiæ opera danda.
Serviendum et lætandum.

I then went to the altar, having, I believe, again read my prayer. I then went to the table and communicated, praying for some time afterwards; but the particular matter of my prayer I do not remember.

I dined, by an appointment, with Mrs. Gardiner, and passed the afternoon with such calm gladness of mind as it is very long since I felt before. I came home, and began to read the Bible. I passed the night in such sweet uninterrupted sleep, as I have not known since I slept at Fort Augustus.

On Monday I dined with Sheward, on Tuesday with Paradise. The mornings have been devoured by company, and one intrusion has, through the whole week, succeeded to another.

At the beginning of the year I proposed to myself a scheme of life, and a plan of study; but neither life has been rectified, nor study followed. Days and months pass in a dream; and I am afraid that my memory grows less tenacious, and my observation less attentive. If I am decaying, it is time to make haste. My nights are restless and tedious, and my days drowsy. The flatulence which torments me, has sometimes so obstructed my breath, that the act of respiration became not only voluntary but laborious in a decumbent posture. By copious bleeding I was relieved, but not cured.

I have this year omitted church on most Sundays, intending to supply the deficience in the week. So that I owe twelve attendances on worship. I will make no more such superstitious stipulations, which entangle the mind with unbidden obligations.

My purpose once more, O Thou merciful Creator, that governest all our hearts and actions, βιοτὴς οἴηκα κυβερνῶν, let not my purpose be vain:—

My purpose once more is,
To rise at eight.

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To keep a journal.
To read the whole Bible, in some language, before Easter.
To gather the arguments for Christianity.
To worship God more frequently in public.

Ashbourn, September 18, 1777.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast brought me to the beginning of another year, grant me so to remember thy gifts, and so to acknowledge thy goodness, as that every year and day which Thou shalt yet grant me, may be employed in the amendment of my life, and in the diligent discharge of such duties as thy providence shall allot me. Grant me, by thy grace, to know and to do what Thou requirest. Give me good desires, and remove those impediments which may hinder them from effect. Forgive me my sins, negligences, and ignorances; and when at last Thou shalt call me to another life, receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1778.

Good Friday.

April 17.

IT has happened this week, as it never happened in Passion Week before, that I have never dined at home, and I have, therefore, neither practised abstinence nor peculiar devotion.

This morning before I went to bed I enlarged my prayers, by adding some Collects with reference to the day. I rested moderately, and rose about nine, which is more early than is usual. I think I added something to my morning prayers. Boswell came in to go to church; we had tea, but I did not eat. Talk lost our time, and we came to church late, at the second lesson. My mind has been for some time feeble and impressible, and some trouble it gave me in the morning; but I went with some confidence and calmness through the prayers.

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In my return from church, I was accosted by Edwards, an old fellow-collegian, who had not seen me since 1729. He knew me, and asked if I remembered one Edwards; I did not at first recollect the name, but gradually, as we walked along, recovered it, and told him a conversation that had passed at an alehouse between us. My purpose is to continue our acquaintance.

We sat till the time of worship in the afternoon, and then came again late, at the Psalms. Not easily, I think, hearing the sermon, or not being attentive, I fell asleep. When we came home we had tea, and I eat two bunns, being somewhat uneasy with fasting, and not being alone. If I had not been observed, I should probably have fasted.

Easter Day.

April 19, after 12 at night.

O LORD, have mercy upon me.

Yesterday (18) I rose late, having not slept ill. Having promised a dedication, I thought it necessary to write: but for some time neither wrote nor read. Langton came in and talked. After dinner I wrote. At tea Boswell came in. He staid till near twelve.

I purposed to have gone in the evening to church, but missed the hour.

Edwards observed how many we have outlived. I hope, yet hope, that my future life shall be better than my past.

From the year 1752, the year in which my poor dear Tetty died, upon whose soul may God have had mercy for the sake of Jesus Christ, I have received the sacrament every year at Easter. My purpose is to receive it now. O Lord God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, make it effectual to my salvation.

My purposes are,

To study divinity, particularly the evidences of Christianity.

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To read the New Testament over in the year, with more use than hitherto of commentators.
To be diligent in my undertakings.
To serve and trust God, and be cheerful.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, suffer me once more to commemorate the death of thy Son Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer, and make the memorial of his death profitable to my salvation, by strengthening my faith in his merits, and quickening my obedience to his laws. Remove from me, O God, all inordinate desires, all corrupt passions, and all vain terrours, and fill me with zeal for thy glory, and with confidence in thy mercy. Make me to love all men, and enable me to use thy gifts, whatever Thou shalt bestow, to the benefit of my fellow-creatures. So lighten the weight of years, and so mitigate the afflictions of disease, that I may continue fit for thy service, and useful in my station. And so let me pass through this life, by the guidance of thy Holy Spirit, that at last I may enter into eternal joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HAVING gone to bed about two, I rose about nine, and, having prayed, went to church. I came early and used this prayer. After sermon I again used my prayer; the Collect for the day I repeated several times, at least the petitions. I recommended my friends. At the altar I prayed earnestly, and when I came home, prayed for pardon and peace; repeated my own prayer, and added the petitions of the Collect.
O God, have mercy upon me, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.
At my return home, I returned thanks for the opportunity of communion.
I was called down to Mrs. Nollikens. Boswell came in; then dinner. After dinner, which I believe was late, I read the First Epistle to Thessalonians; then went to

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Evening Prayers; then came to tea, and afterwards tried *Vossius de Baptismo*. I was sleepy.

Monday, April 20, 1778.

AFTER a good night, as I am forced to reckon, I rose seasonably, and prayed, using the Collect for yesterday.

In reviewing my time from Easter 1777, I found a very melancholy and shameful blank. So little has been done, that days and months are without any trace. My health has, indeed, been very much interrupted. My nights have been commonly, not only restless, but painful and fatiguing. My respiration was once so difficult, that an asthma was suspected. I could not walk, but with great difficulty, from Stowhill to Greenhill. Some relaxation of my breast has been procured, I think, by opium, which, though it never gives me sleep, frees my breast from spasms.

I have written a little of the Lives of the Poets. I think with all my usual vigour. I have made sermons, perhaps as readily as formerly. My memory is less faithful in retaining names, and, I am afraid, in retaining occurrences. Of this vacillation and vagrancy of mind, I impute a great part to a fortuitous and unsettled life, and therefore purpose to spend my time with more method.

This year, the 28th of March passed away without memorial. Poor Tetty, whatever were our faults and failings, we loved each other. I did not forget thee yesterday. Couldest thou have lived!——

I am now, with the help of God, to begin a new life.

1779.

Jan. 1, before 1 in the morning.

ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, who hast granted to me the beginning of another year, grant that I may employ thy gifts to thy glory, and my own salvation. Excite me to amend my life; give me good resolutions, and enable me to perform them. As I approach the grave,

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let my faith be invigorated, my hope exalted, and my charity enlarged. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit; but in the course of my life protect me, in the hour of death sustain me, and finally receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Good Friday.

April 2.

AFTER a night restless and oppressive, I rose this morning somewhat earlier than is usual; and having taken tea, which was very necessary to compose the disorder in my breast, having eaten nothing, I went to church with Boswell. We came late; I was able to attend the Litany with little perturbation. When we came home, I began the First to the Thessalonians, having prayed by the Collect for the right use of the Scriptures. I gave Boswell *Les Pensées de Pascal*, that he might not interrupt me. I did not, I believe, read very diligently; and before I had read far, we went to church again; I was again attentive. At home I read again, then drank tea, with a bunn and an half, thinking myself less able to fast than at former times; and then concluded the Epistle. Being much oppressed with drowsiness, I slept about an hour by the fire.

11 P. M.

I AM now to review the last year, and find little but dismal vacuity, neither business nor pleasure; much intended, and little done. My health is much broken; my nights afford me little rest. I have tried opium, but its help is counterbalanced with great disturbance; it prevents the spasms, but it hinders sleep. O God, have mercy on me.

Last week I published [the first part of] the Lives of the Poets, written, I hope, in such a manner as may tend to the promotion of piety.

In this last year I have made little acquisition; I have scarcely read any thing. I maintain Mrs. ——— and

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her daughter. Other good of myself I know not where to find, except a little charity.

But I am now in my seventieth year; what can be done, ought not to be delayed.

Easter Eve.

April 3, 1779, 11 P. M.

THIS is the time of my annual review, and annual resolution. The review is comfortless, little done. Part of the Life of Dryden and the Life of Milton have been written; but my mind has neither been improved nor enlarged. I have read little, almost nothing. And I am not conscious that I have gained any good, or quitted any evil habits.

Of resolutions I have made so many, with so little effect, that I am almost weary, but by the help of God, am not yet hopeless. Good resolutions must be made and kept. I am almost seventy years old, and have no time to lose. The distressful restlessness of my nights, makes it difficult to settle the course of my days. Something, however, let me do.

Easter Day.

April 4, 1779.

I ROSE about half an hour after nine, transcribed the prayer written last night; and by neglecting to count time, sat too long at breakfast, so that I came to church at the First Lesson. I attended the Litany pretty well; but in the pew could not hear the communion service, and missed the prayer for the church militant. Before I went to the altar, I prayed the occasional prayer. At the altar I commended my ⊖ Φ, and again prayed the prayer; I then prayed the Collects, and again my own prayer by memory. I left out a clause. I then received, I hope with earnestness; and while others received sat down; but thinking that posture, though usual, improper, I rose and stood. I prayed again, in the pew, but with what prayer I have forgotten.

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When I used the occasional prayer at the altar, I added a general purpose,

To avoid idleness.

I gave two shillings to the plate.

Before I went I used, I think, my prayer, and endeavoured to calm my mind. After my return I used it again, and the Collect for the day. Lord have mercy upon me.

I have for some nights called Francis to prayers, and last night discoursed with him on the sacrament.

Easter Day.

April 4, 1779.

Purposes.

To rise at eight, or as soon as I can.

To read the Scriptures.

To study religion.

ALMIGHTY God, by thy merciful continuance of my life, I come once more to commemorate the sufferings and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and to implore that mercy which, for his sake, Thou shewest to sinners. Forgive me my sins, O Lord, and enable me to forsake them. Ease, if it shall please Thee, the anxieties of my mind, and relieve the infirmities of my body. Let me not be disturbed by unnecessary terrours, and let not the weakness of age make me unable to amend my life. O Lord, take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but receive my petitions, succour and comfort me, and let me so pass the remainder of my days, that when Thou shalt call me hence, I may enter into eternal happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sept. 18, 1779, H. P. M. 12ma.

ALMIGHTY God, Creator of all things, in whose hands are life and death, glory be to Thee for all thy mercies, and for the prolongation of my life to the common age of man. Pardon me, O gracious God, all the offences which in the course of seventy years I have committed against

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thy holy laws, and all negligences of those duties which Thou hast required. Look with pity upon me, take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but enable me to pass the days which Thou shalt yet vouchsafe to grant me, in thy fear, and to thy glory; and accept, O Lord, the remains of a mispent life, that when Thou shalt call me to another state, I may be received to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Epsom.

My purpose is to communicate at least thrice a year.
To study the Scriptures.
To be diligent.

1780.

Jan 1, H. 1, A. M.

Almighty God, my Creator and Preserver, by whose mercy my life has been continued to the beginning of another year, grant me, with increase of days increase of holiness; that as I live longer, I may be better prepared to appear before Thee, when Thou shalt call me from my present state.

Make me, O Lord, truly thankful for the mercy which Thou hast vouchsafed to shew me through my whole life; make me thankful for the health which Thou hast restored in the last year, and let the remains of my strength and life be employed to thy glory and my own salvation.

Take not, O Lord, thy Holy Spirit from me; enable me to avoid or overcome all that may hinder my advancement in godliness; let me be no longer idle, no longer sinful; but give me rectitude of thought and constancy of action, and bring me at last to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Sunday, June 18.

In the morning of this day last year, I perceived the remission of those convulsions in my breast, which had distressed me for more than twenty years. I returned

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thanks at church for the mercy granted me, which has now continued a year.

Thanksgiving.

ALMIGHTY God, our Creator and Preserver, from whom proceedeth all good, enable me to receive with humble acknowledgment of thy unbounded benignity, and with due consciousness of my own unworthiness, that recovery and continuance of health which Thou hast granted me, and vouchsafe to accept the thanks which I now offer. Glory be to Thee, O Lord, for this and all thy mercies. Grant, I beseech Thee, that the health and life which Thou shalt yet allow me, may conduce to my eternal happiness. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit; but so help and bless me, that when Thou shalt call me hence, I may obtain pardon and salvation, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

September 18, 1780.

I AM now beginning the seventy-second year of my life, with more strength of body and greater vigour of mind than I think is common at that age. But though the convulsions in my breast are relieved, my sleep is seldom long. My nights are wakeful, and, therefore, I am sometimes sleepy in the day. I have been attentive to my diet, and have diminished the bulk of my body. I have not at all studied, nor written diligently. I have Swift and Pope yet to write; Swift is just begun.

I have forgotten or neglected my resolutions or purposes, which I now humbly and timorously renew. Surely I shall not spend my whole life with my own total disapprobation. Perhaps God may grant me now to begin a wiser and a better life.

ALMIGHTY God, my Creator and Preserver, who hast permitted me to begin another year, look with mercy upon my wretchedness and frailty. Rectify my thoughts, relieve

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my perplexities, strengthen my purposes, and reform my doings. Let increase of years bring increase of faith, hope, and charity. Grant me diligence in whatever work thy providence shall appoint me. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but let me pass the remainder of the days which Thou shalt yet allow me, in thy fear and to thy glory; and when it shall be thy good pleasure to call me hence, grant me, O Lord, forgiveness of my sins, and receive me to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1781.

January 2.

I WAS yesterday hindered by my old disease of mind, and therefore begin to-day.

January 1.

HAVING sat in my chamber till the year began, I used my accommodation of the Morning Prayer *to the beginning of this year*, and slept remarkably well, though I had supped liberally. In the morning I went to church. Then I wrote letters for Mrs. Desmoulins; then went to Streatham, and had many stops. At night I took wine, and did not sleep well.

January 2, 1781.

I ROSE according to my resolution, and am now to begin another year; I hope with amendment of life. I will not despair. Help me, help me, O my God. My hope is,

To rise at eight, or sooner.
To read the Bible through this year, in some language.
To keep a journal.
To study religion.
To avoid idleness.

ALMIGHTY God, merciful Father, who hast granted me such continuance of life, that I now see the beginning of

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another year, look with mercy upon me; as Thou grantest increase of years, grant increase of grace. Let me live to repent what I have done amiss, and by thy help so to regulate my future life, that I may obtain mercy when I appear before Thee through the merits of Jesus Christ. Enable me, O Lord, to do my duty with a quiet mind; and take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but protect and bless me, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Good Friday.

April 13, 1781.

I FORGOT my prayer and resolutions, till two days ago I found this paper.

Some time in March I finished the Lives of the Poets, which I wrote in my usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work, and working with vigour and haste.

On Wednesday 11, was buried my dear friend Thrale, who died on Wednesday 4; and with him were buried many of my hopes and pleasures. About five, I think, on Wednesday morning he expired; I felt almost the last flutter of his pulse, and looked for the last time upon the face that for fifteen years had never been turned upon me but with respect or benignity. Farewell. May God, that delighteth in mercy, have had mercy on thee.

I had constantly prayed for him some time before his death.

The decease of him, from whose friendship I had obtained many opportunities of amusement, and to whom I turned my thoughts as to a refuge from misfortunes, has left me heavy. But my business is with myself.

September 18.

My first knowledge of Thrale was in 1765. I enjoyed his favour for almost a fourth part of my life.

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Easter Eve.

April 14, 1781.

On Good Friday I took, in the afternoon, some coffee and buttered cake; and to-day, I had a little bread at breakfast, and potatoes and apples in the afternoon, the tea with a little toast; but I find myself feeble and unsustained, and suspect that I cannot bear to fast so long as formerly.

This day I read some of Clarke's Sermons. I hope that since my last communion I have advanced, by pious reflections, in my submission to God and my benevolence to man; but I have corrected no external habits, nor have kept any of the resolutions made in the beginning of the year; yet I hope still to be reformed, and not to lose my whole life in idle purposes. Many years are already gone, irrevocably past, in useless misery; that what remains may be spent better, grant, O God.

By this awful festival is particularly recommended newness of life: and a new life I will now endeavour to begin, by more diligent application to useful employment, and more frequent attendance on public worship.

I again, with hope of help from the God of mercy, resolve,

To avoid idleness.

To read the Bible.

To study religion.

Almighty God, merciful Father, by whose protection I have been preserved, and by whose clemency I have been spared, grant that the life which Thou hast so long continued may be no longer wasted in idleness, or corrupted by wickedness. Let my future purposes be good, and let not my good purposes be vain. Free me, O Lord, from vain terrours, and strengthen me in diligent obedience to thy laws. Take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but

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enable me so to commemorate the death of my Saviour Jesus Christ, that I may be made partaker of his merits; and may finally, for his sake, obtain everlasting happiness. Amen.

Easter Sunday

1781.

I ROSE after eight, and breakfasted; then went early to church, and before service read the prayer for the Church Militant. I commended my ☉[c] friends, as I have formerly done. I was one of the last that communicated. When I came home I was hindered by visitants, but found time to pray before dinner. God, send thy blessing upon me.

Monday, April 16.

AT night I had some mental vellications, or revulsions. I prayed in my chamber with Frank, and read the first Sunday in the Duty of Man, in which I had, till then, only looked by compulsion or by chance.

This day I repeated my prayer, and hope to be heard.

I have, I thank God, received the Sacrament every year at Easter since the death of my poor dear Tetty. I once felt some temptation to omit it, but I was preserved from compliance. This was the thirtieth Easter.

June 22, 1781.

ALMIGHTY God, who art the giver of all good, enable me to remember with due thankfulness the comforts and advantages, which I have enjoyed by the friendship of Henry Thrale, for whom, so far as is lawful, I humbly implore thy mercy in his present state. O Lord, since Thou hast been pleased to call him from this world, look with mercy on those whom he has left; continue to succour me by such means as are best for me, and repay

[c] Sic MS. [My deceased friends.]

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to his relations the kindness which I have received from him; protect them in this world from temptations and calamities, and grant them happiness in the world to come for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

September 2, 1781.

WHEN Thrale's health was broken, for many months, I think, before his death, which happened April 4, I constantly mentioned him in my prayer: and after his death, have made particular supplication for his surviving family to this day.

September 18.

THIS is my seventy-third birthday, an awful day. I said a preparatory prayer last night, and waking early, made use, in the dark, as I sat up in bed, of the prayer [beginning of this year.] I rose, breakfasted, and gave thanks at church for my creation, preservation, and redemption. As I came home, I thought I had never begun any period of life so placidly. I read the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, and looked into Hammond's notes. I have always been accustomed to let this day pass unnoticed, but it came this time into my mind that some little festivity was not improper. I had a dinner, and invited Allen and Levet.

What has passed in my thoughts on this anniversary, is in stitched book K.[d]

My purposes are the same as on the first day of this year, to which I add hope of

More frequent attendance on public worship.

Participation of the Sacrament at least three times a year.

September 18, Vesp. 10h 40′, circ.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who hast added another year to my life, and yet permittest me to call upon Thee, grant that the remaining days which Thou shalt

[d] This book is not in the Editor's possession.

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yet allow me, may be past in thy fear and to thy glory. Grant me good resolutions and steady perseverance. Relieve the diseases of my body, and compose the disquiet of my mind. Let me at last repent and amend my life; and, O Lord, take not from me thy Holy Spirit, but assist my amendment, and accept my repentance, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sunday, October 14, 1781.
(Properly Monday morning.)

I AM this day about to go by Oxford and Birmingham to Lichfield and Ashbourne. The motives of my journey I hardly know. I omitted it last year, and am not willing to miss it again. Mrs. Aston will be glad, I think, to see me. We are both old, and if I put off my visit, I may see her no more; perhaps she wishes for another interview. She is a very good woman.

Hector is likewise an old friend, the only companion of my childhood that passed through the school with me. We have always loved one another. Perhaps we may be made better by some serious conversation, of which, however, I have no distinct hope.

At Lichfield, my native place, I hope to show a good example, by frequent attendance on public worship.

At Ashbourne, I hope to talk seriously with ——.

1782.

March 18.

HAVING been, from the middle of January, distressed by a cold which made my respiration very laborious, and from which I was but little relieved by being blooded three times; having tried to ease the oppression of my breast by frequent opiates, which kept me waking in the night, and drowsy the next day, and subjected me to the tyranny of vain imaginations; having to all this added frequent catharticks, sometimes with mercury, I at last persuaded Dr. Laurence, on Thursday, March 14, to let me bleed more copiously. Sixteen ounces

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were taken away, and from that time my breath has been free, and my breast easy. On that day I took little food, and no flesh. On Thursday night I slept with great tranquillity. On the next night (15) I took diacodium, and had a most restless night. Of the next day I remember nothing, but that I rose in the afternoon, and saw Mrs. Lennox and Sheward.

Sunday 17. I lay late, and had only Palfrey to dinner. I read part of Waller's Directory, a pious rational book; but in any, except a very regular, life difficult to practise.

It occurred to me, that though my time might pass unemployed, no more should pass uncounted, and this has been written to-day, in consequence of that thought. I read a Greek chapter, prayed with Francis, which I now do commonly, and explained to him the Lord's Prayer, in which I find connexion not observed, I think, by the expositors. I made punch for myself and my servants, by which, in the night, I thought both my breast and imagination disordered.

March 18. I rose late, looked a little into books. Saw Miss Reynolds and Miss Thrale and Nicolaida; afterwards Dr. Hunter came for his catalogue. I then dined on tea, &c.; then read over part of Dr. Laurence's book, "De Temperamentis," which seems to have been written with a troubled mind.

My mind has been for some time much disturbed. The peace of God be with me.

I hope to-morrow to finish Laurence, and to write to Mrs. Aston and to Lucy.

19. I rose late. I was visited by Mrs. Thrale, Mr. Cotton, and Mr. Crofts. I took Laurence's paper in my hand, but was chill: having fasted yesterday, I was hungry, and dined freely, then slept a little, and drank tea; then took candles, and wrote to Aston and Lucy, then went on with Laurence, of which little remains. I prayed with Francis.

Mens sedatior, laus Deo.

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To-morrow Shaw comes. I think to finish Laurence, and write to Langton.

Poor Laurence has almost lost the sense of hearing; and I have lost the conversation of a learned, intelligent, and communicative companion, and a friend whom long familiarity has much endeared. Laurence is one of the best men whom I have known.

Nostrum omnium miserere Deus.

20. Shaw came; I finished reading Laurence. I dined liberally. Wrote a long letter to Langton, and designed to read, but was hindered by Strahan. The ministry is dissolved. I prayed with Francis, and gave thanks.

To-morrow—To Mrs. Thrale—To write to Hector—To Dr. Taylor.

21. I went to Mrs. Thrale. Mr. Cox and Paradise met me at the door, and went with me in the coach. Paradise's Loss. In the evening wrote to Hector. At night there were eleven visitants. Conversation with Mr. Cox. When I waked I saw the penthouses covered with snow.

22. I spent the time idly. Mens turbata. In the afternoon it snowed. At night I wrote to Taylor about the pot, and to Hamilton about the Fœdera.

23. I came home, and found that Desmoulins had, while I was away, been in bed. Letters from Langton and Boswell. I promised L——— six guineas.

24. Sunday. I rose not early. Visiters, Allen, Davis, Windham, Dr. Horsley. Dinner at Strahan's. Came home and chatted with Williams, and read Romans ix. in Greek.

To-morrow begin again to read the Bible; put rooms in order; copy L——'s letter. At night I read 11 p. and something more, of the Bible, in fifty-five minutes.

26. Tu. I copied L——'s letter. Then wrote to Mrs. Thrale. Cox visited me. I sent home Dr. Laurence's papers, with notes. I gave D—— a guinea, and found her a gown.

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27. W.—At Harley-street. Bad nights—in the evening Dr. Bromfield and his family—Merlin's steelyard given me.

28. Th. I came home. Sold Rymer for Davies; wrote to Boswell. Visiters, Dr. Percy, Mr. Crofts. I have in ten days, written to Aston, Lucy, Hector, Langton, Boswell; perhaps to all by whom my letters are desired.

The weather, which now begins to be warm, gives me great help. I have hardly been at church this year; certainly not since the 15th of January. My cough and difficulty of breath would not permit it.

This is the day on which, in 1752, dear Tetty died. I have now uttered a prayer of repentance and contrition; perhaps Tetty knows that I prayed for her. Perhaps Tetty is now praying for me. God help me. Thou, God, art merciful, hear my prayers, and enable me to trust in Thee.

We were married almost seventeen years, and have now been parted thirty.

I then read 11 p. from Ex. 36 to Lev. 7. I prayed with Fr. and used the prayer for Good Friday.

29. Good Friday. After a night of great disturbance and solicitude, such as I do not remember, I rose, drank tea, but without eating, and went to church. I was very composed, and coming home, read Hammond on one of the Psalms for the day. I then read Leviticus. Scott came in. A kind letter from Gastrel. I read on, then went to evening prayers, and afterwards drank tea, with bunns; then read till I finished Leviticus 24 pages et sup.

To write to Gastrel to-morrow.

To look again into Hammond.

30. Sat. Visiters, Paradise, and I think Horsley. Read 11 pages of the Bible. I was faint; dined on herrings and potatoes. At prayers, I think, in the evening. I wrote to Gastrel, and received a kind letter from Hector. At night Lowe. Pr. with Francis.

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31. Easter Day. Read 15 pages of the Bible. Cætera alibi.

At the Table.

ALMIGHTY God, by whose mercy I am now permitted to commemorate my redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ; grant that this awful remembrance may strengthen my faith, enliven my hope, and increase my charity; that I may trust in Thee with my whole heart, and do good according to my power. Grant me the help of thy Holy Spirit, that I may do thy will with diligence, and suffer it with humble patience; so that when Thou shalt call me to judgment, I may obtain forgiveness and acceptance, for the sake of Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

At Departure, or at Home.

GRANT, I beseech Thee, merciful Lord, that the designs of a new and better life, which by thy grace I have now formed, may not pass away without effect. Incite and enable me, by thy Holy Spirit, to improve the time which Thou shalt grant me; to avoid all evil thoughts, words, and actions; and to do all the duties which Thou shalt set before me. Hear my prayer, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

These prayers I wrote for Mrs. Lucy Porter,* in the latter end of the year 1782, and transcribed them October 9, 1784.

On leaving Mr. Thrale's Family.

October 6, 1782.

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercy, help me by thy grace, that I may with humble and sincere thankfulness remember the comforts and conveniencies which I have enjoyed at this place, and that I may resign them with holy submission, equally trusting in thy protection when

* Daughter-in-law to Dr. Johnson, she died at Lichfield, in 1786.

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Thou givest and when Thou takest away. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me.

To thy fatherly protection, O Lord, I commend this family. Bless, guide, and defend them, that they may so pass through this world, as finally to enjoy in thy presence everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

O Lord, so far as, &c.—Thrale.

October 7.

I WAS called early. I packed up my bundles, and used the foregoing prayer, with my morning devotions somewhat, I think, enlarged. Being earlier than the family, I read St. Paul's farewell in the Acts, and then read fortuitously in the Gospels, which was my parting use of the library.

1776.

September 6.

I had just heard of Williams' death.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who art the Lord of life and death, who givest and who takest away, teach me to adore thy providence, whatever Thou shalt allot me; make me to remember, with due thankfulness, the comforts which I have received from my friendship with Anna Williams.[f] Look upon her, O Lord, with mercy, and prepare me, by thy grace, to die with hope, and to pass by death to eternal happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

1784.

Easter Day.

April 11.

ALMIGHTY God, my Creator and my Judge, who givest life and takest it away, enable me to return sincere and

[f] This lady, who was afflicted with blindness, lived many years with Dr. Johnson, and died in his house. She wrote several poems, which were published in one volume 4to. 1766.

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humble thanks for my late deliverance from imminent death; so govern my future life by thy Holy Spirit, that every day which Thou shalt permit to pass over me, may be spent in thy service, and leave me less tainted with wickedness, and more submissive to thy will.

Enable me, O Lord, to glorify Thee for that knowledge of my corruption, and that sense of thy wrath, which my disease, and weakness, and danger awakened in my mind. Give me such sorrow as may purify my heart, such indignation as may quench all confidence in myself, and such repentance as may, by the intercession of my Redeemer, obtain pardon. Let the commemoration of the sufferings and death of thy Son, which I am now by thy favour once more permitted to make, fill me with faith, hope, and charity. Let my purposes be good, and my resolutions unshaken; and let me not be hindered or distracted by vain and useless fears, but through the time which yet remains, guide me by thy Holy Spirit, and finally receive me to everlasting life, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Against inquisitive and perplexing Thoughts.

August 12, 1784.

O Lord, my Maker and Protector, who hast graciously sent me into this world to work out my salvation, enable me to drive from me all such unquiet and perplexing thoughts as may mislead or hinder me in the practice of those duties which Thou hast required. When I behold the works of thy hands, and consider the course of thy providence, give me grace always to remember that thy thoughts are not my thoughts, nor thy ways my ways. And while it shall please Thee to continue me in this world, where much is to be done, and little to be known, teach me, by thy Holy Spirit, to withdraw my mind from unprofitable and dangerous inquiries, from difficulties vainly curious, and doubts impossible to be solved. Let me rejoice in the light which Thou hast imparted, let me serve Thee with active zeal and humble confidence, and

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wait with patient expectation for the time in which the soul which Thou receivest shall be satisfied with knowledge. Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Ashbourne, August 28, 1784.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who afflictest not willingly the children of men, and by whose holy will ——— now languishes in sickness and pain, make, I beseech Thee, this punishment effectual to those gracious purposes for which Thou sendest it; let it, if I may presume to ask, end not in death, but in repentance; let him live to promote thy kingdom on earth, by the useful example of a better life; but if thy will be to call him hence, let his thoughts be so purified by his sufferings, that he may be admitted to eternal happiness. And, O Lord, by praying for him, let me be admonished to consider my own sins, and my own danger, to remember the shortness of life, and to use the time which thy mercy grants me to thy glory and my own salvation, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[The following prayer was composed and used by Doctor Johnson previous to his receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, on Sunday, December 5, 1784.]

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, I am now, as to human eyes it seems, about to commemorate, for the last time,[s] the death of thy Son Jesus Christ our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O Lord, that my whole hope and confidence may be in his merits, and thy mercy; enforce and accept my imperfect repentance; make this commemoration available to the confirmation of my faith, the establishment of my hope, and the enlargement of my charity; and make the death of thy Son Jesus Christ effectual to my redemption. Have mercy upon me, and pardon the

[s] He died the 13th following.

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multitude of my offences. Bless my friends; have mercy upon all men. Support me, by thy Holy Spirit, in the days of weakness, and at the hour of death; and receive me, at my death, to everlasting happiness, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

[The following meditations and prayers have no dates in the MS.]

I DID not, this week, labour my preparation so much as I have sometimes done. My mind was not very quiet; and an anxious preparation makes the duty of the day formidable and burdensome. Different methods suit different states of mind, body, and affairs. I rose this day, and prayed, then went to tea, and afterwards composed the prayer, which I formed with great fluency. I went to church; came in at the Psalms; could not hear the reader in the lessons, but attended the prayers with tranquillity.

To read the New Testament once a year in Greek.

Receiving the Sacrament,

I profess my faith in Jesus.

I declare my resolution to obey him.

I implore, in the highest act of worship, grace to keep these resolutions.

I hope to rise to a new life this day.

ON the 17th, Mr. Chamier took me away with him from Streatham. I left the servants a guinea for my health, and was content enough to escape into a house where my birthday, not being known, could not be mentioned. I sat up till midnight was past, and the day of a new year, a very awful day, began. I prayed to God, who had [safely brought me to the beginning of another year,] but could not perfectly recollect the prayer, and supplied it. Such desertions of memory I have always had.

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When I rose on the 18th, I think I prayed again, then walked with my friend into his grounds. When I came back, after some time passed in the library, finding myself oppressed by sleepiness, I retired to my chamber, where by lying down, and a short imperfect slumber, I was refreshed, and prayed as the night before.

I then dined, and trifled in the parlour and library, and was freed from a scruple about Horace. At last I went to bed, having first composed a prayer.

19, Sunday. I went to church, and attended the service. I found at church a time to use my prayer, O Lord, have mercy—

July 30.

ALMIGHTY God, Creator and Governor of the world, who sendest sickness and restorest health, enable me to consider, with a just sense of thy mercy, the deliverance which Thou hast lately granted me, and assist by thy blessing, as is best for me, the means which I shall use for the cure of the disease with which I am now afflicted. Increase my patience, teach me submission to thy will, and so rule my thoughts and direct my actions, that I may be finally received to everlasting happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

On the Study of Religion.

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, without whose help labour is useless, without whose light search is vain, invigorate my studies, and direct my inquiries, that I may, by due diligence and right discernment, establish myself and others in thy Holy Faith. Take not, O Lord, thy Holy Spirit from me; let not evil thoughts have dominion in my mind. Let me not linger in ignorance, but enlighten and support me, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O LORD God, in whose hand are the wills and affections of men, kindle in my mind holy desires, and repress

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sinful and corrupt imaginations; enable me to love thy commandments, and to desire thy promises: let me, by thy protection and influence, so pass through things temporal, as finally not to lose the things eternal; and among the hopes and fears, the pleasures and sorrows, the dangers and deliverances, and all the changes of this life, let my heart be surely fixed, by the help of thy Holy Spirit, on the everlasting fruition of thy presence, where true joys are to be found. Grant, O Lord, these petitions. Forgive, O merciful Lord, whatever I have done contrary to thy laws. Give me such a sense of my wickedness as may produce true contrition and effectual repentance, so that when I shall be called into another state, I may be received among the sinners to whom sorrow and reformation have obtained pardon, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, whose clemency I now presume to implore, after a long life of carelessness and wickedness, have mercy upon me. I have committed many trespasses; I have neglected many duties. I have done what Thou hast forbidden, and left undone what Thou hast commanded. Forgive, merciful Lord, my sins, negligences, and ignorances, and enable me, by thy Holy Spirit, to amend my life, according to thy Holy Word, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

O MERCIFUL God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and of great pity, who sparest when we deserve punishment, and in thy wrath thinkest upon mercy; make me earnestly to repent, and heartily to be sorry for all my misdoings; make the remembrance so burdensome and painful, that I may flee to Thee with a troubled spirit and a contrite heart; and, O merciful Lord, visit, comfort, and relieve me; cast me not out from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me, but excite in me true repentance; give me in this world knowledge of thy truth, and confidence in thy mercy, and in the world to come,

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life everlasting, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour, thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Ejaculation.

Imploring Diligence.

O GOD, make me to remember that *the night cometh when no man can work.*

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SERMONS

LEFT FOR PUBLICATION

BY

JOHN TAYLOR, LL. D.

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SERMON I.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father, and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife."—GEN. ii. 24, first part.

THAT society is necessary to the happiness of human nature, that the gloom of solitude, and the stillness of retirement, however they may flatter at a distance, with pleasing views of independence and serenity, neither extinguish the passions, nor enlighten the understanding, that discontent will intrude upon privacy, and temptations follow us to the desert, every one may be easily convinced, either by his own experience, or that of others. That knowledge is advanced by an intercourse of sentiments, and an exchange of observations, and that the bosom is disburdened by a communication of its cares, is too well known for proof or illustration. In solitude, perplexity swells into distraction, and grief settles into melancholy; even the satisfactions and pleasures, that may by chance be found, are but imperfectly enjoyed, when they are enjoyed without participation.

How high this disposition may extend, and how far society may contribute to the felicity of more exalted natures, it is not easy to determine, nor necessary to inquire. It seems, however, probable, that this inclination is allotted to all rational beings of limited excellence, and that it is the privilege only of the infinite Creator to derive all his happiness from himself.

It is a proof of the regard of God for the happiness of mankind, that the means by which it must be attained are obvious and evident; that we are not left to discover them, by difficult speculations, intricate disquisitions, or long experience, but are led to them, equally by our pas-

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sions and our reason, in prosperity and distress. Every man perceives his own insufficiency to supply himself with what either necessity or convenience require, and applies to others for assistance. Every one feels his satisfaction impaired by the suppression of pleasing emotions, and consequently endeavours to find an opportunity of diffusing his satisfaction.

As a general relation to the rest of the species, is not sufficient to procure gratifications for the private desires of particular persons; as closer ties of union are necessary to promote the separate interests of individuals, the great society of the world is divided into different communities, which are again subdivided into smaller bodies, and more contracted associations, which pursue, or ought to pursue, a particular interest, in subordination to the publick good, and consistently with the general happiness of mankind.

Each of these subdivisions produces new dependencies and relations, and every particular relation gives rise to a particular scheme of duties. Duties which are of the utmost importance, and of the most sacred obligation, as the neglect of them would defeat all the blessings of society, and cut off even the hope of happiness; as it would poison the fountain whence it must be drawn, and make those institutions, which have been formed as necessary to peace and satisfaction, the means of disquiet and misery.

The lowest subdivision of society is that by which it is broken into private families; nor do any duties demand more to be explained and enforced than those which this relation produces; because none is more universally obligatory, and perhaps very few are more frequently neglected.

The universality of these duties requires no other proof than may be received from the most cursory and superficial observation of human life. Very few men have it in their power to injure society in a large extent; the general happiness of the world can be very little interrupted by the wickedness of any single man, and the number is not large of those by whom the peace of any particular nation can be disturbed; but every man may injure a family,

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and produce domestick disorders and distresses; almost every one has opportunities, and perhaps sometimes temptations, to rebel as a wife, or tyrannize as a husband; and, therefore, to almost every one are those admonitions necessary, that may assist in regulating the conduct, and impress just notions of the behaviour, which these relations exact.

Nor are these obligations more evident than the neglect of them; a neglect of which daily examples may be found, and from which daily calamities arise. Almost all the miseries of life, almost all the wickedness that infects, and all the distresses that afflict mankind, are the consequences of some defects in these duties. It is, therefore, no objection to the propriety of discoursing upon them, that they are well known and generally acknowledged; for a very small part of the disorders of the world proceed from ignorance of the laws by which life ought to be regulated; nor do many, even of those whose hands are polluted with the foulest crimes, deny the reasonableness of virtue, or attempt to justify their own actions. Men are not blindly betrayed into corruption, but abandon themselves to their passions with their eyes open; and lose the direction of truth, because they do not attend to her voice, not because they do not hear, or do not understand it. It is, therefore, no less useful to rouse the thoughtless than instruct the ignorant; to awaken the attention than enlighten the understanding.

There is another reason, for which it may be proper to dwell long upon these duties, and return frequently to them; that deep impressions of them may be formed and renewed, as often as time or temptation shall begin to erase them. Offences against society, in its greater extent, are cognisable by human laws. No man can invade the property, or disturb the quiet of his neighbour, without subjecting himself to penalties, and suffering in proportion to the injuries he has offered. But cruelty and pride, oppression and partiality, may tyrannize in private families without control; meekness may be trampled on, and

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piety insulted, without any appeal, but to conscience and to heaven. A thousand methods of torture may be invented, a thousand acts of unkindness, or disregard, may be committed, a thousand innocent gratifications may be denied, and a thousand hardships imposed, without any violation of national laws. Life may be imbittered with hourly vexation; and weeks, months, and years, be lingered out in misery, without any legal cause of separation, or possibility of judicial redress. Perhaps no sharper anguish is felt, than that which cannot be complained of, nor any greater cruelties inflicted, than some which no human authority can relieve.

That marriage itself, an institution designed only for the promotion of happiness, and for the relief of the disappointments, anxieties, and distresses, to which we are subject in our present state, does not always produce the effects for which it was appointed; that it sometimes condenses the gloom, which it was intended to dispel, and increases the weight, which was expected to be made lighter by it, must, however unwillingly, be yet acknowledged.

It is to be considered to what causes, effects so unexpected and unpleasing, so contrary to the end of the institution, and so unlikely to arise from it, are to be attributed; it is necessary to inquire, whether those that are thus unhappy are to impute their misery to any other cause than their own folly, and to the neglect of those duties, which prudence and religion equally require.

This inquiry may not only be of use in stating and explaining the duties of the marriage-state, but may contribute to free it from licentious misrepresentations and weak objections; which, indeed, can have little force upon minds not already adapted to receive impressions from them by habits of debauchery; but which, when they cooperate with lewdness, intemperance, and vanity; when they are proposed to an understanding naturally weak, and made yet weaker, by luxury and sloth, by an implicit resignation to reigning follies, and an habitual compliance

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with every appetite; may at least add strength to prejudices, to support an opinion already favoured, and perhaps hinder conviction, or at least retard it.

It may, indeed, be asserted to the honour of marriage, that it has few adversaries among men either distinguished for their abilities, or eminent for their virtue. Those who have assumed the province of attacking it, of overturning the constitution of the world, of encountering the authority of the wisest legislators, from whom it has received the highest sanction of human wisdom; and subverting the maxims of the most flourishing states, in which it has been dignified with honours, and promoted with immunities; those who have undertaken the task of contending with reason and experience, with earth and with heaven, are men who seem generally not selected by nature for great attempts, or difficult undertakings. They are, for the most part, such as owe not their determinations to their arguments, but their arguments to their determinations. Disputants animated not by a consciousness of truth, but by the number of their adherents; and heated not with zeal for the right, but with the rage of licentiousness and impatience of restraint. And, perhaps, to the sober, the understanding, and the pious, it may be sufficient to remark, that religion and marriage have the same enemies.

There are, indeed, some in other communions of the Christian church, who censure marriage upon different motives, and prefer celibacy to a state more immediately devoted to the honour of God, and the regular and assiduous practice of the duties of religion; and have recommended vows of abstinence, no where commanded in Scripture, and imposed restraints upon lawful desires; of which it is easy to judge how well they are adapted to the present state of human nature, by the frequent violation of them, even in those societies where they are voluntarily incurred, and where no vigilance is omitted to secure the observation of them.

But the authors of these rigorous and unnatural schemes

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of life, though certainly misled by false notions of holiness, and perverted conceptions of the duties of our religion; have at least the merit of mistaken endeavours to promote virtue, and must be allowed to have reasoned at least with some degree of probability, in vindication of their conduct. They were generally persons of piety, and sometimes of knowledge, and are, therefore, not to be confounded with the fool, the drunkard, and the libertine. They who decline marriage, for the sake of a more severe and mortified life, are surely to be distinguished from those who condemn it as too rigorous a confinement, and wish the abolition of it in favour of boundless voluptuousness and licensed debauchery.

Perhaps even the errours of mistaken goodness may be rectified, and the prejudices surmounted by deliberate attention to the nature of the institution; and certainly the calumnies of wickedness may be, by the same means, confuted, though its clamours may not be silenced; since commonly, in debates like this, confutation and conviction are very distant from each other. For that nothing but vice or folly obstructs the happiness of a married life may be made evident by examining,

FIRST: The nature and end of marriage.

SECONDLY: The means by which that end is to be attained.

FIRST: The nature and end of marriage.

The vow of marriage which the wisdom of most civilized nations has enjoined, and which the rules of the Christian church enjoin, may be properly considered as a vow of perpetual and indissoluble friendship; friendship which no change of fortune, nor any alteration of external circumstances, can be allowed to interrupt or weaken. After the commencement of this state, there remain no longer any separate interests; the two individuals become united, and are, therefore, to enjoy the same felicity, and suffer the same misfortunes; to have the same friends and the same enemies, the same success and the same disappointments. It is easy, by pursuing the parallel between friendship and

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marriage, to show how exact a conformity there is between them, to prove that all the precepts laid down with respect to the contraction, and the maxims advanced with regard to the effects, of friendship, are true of marriage in a more literal sense and a stricter acceptation.

It has long been observed that friendship is to be confined to one; or that, to use the words of the axiom, *He that hath friends, has no friend.*[a] That ardour of kindness, that unbounded confidence, that unsuspecting security which friendship requires, cannot be extended beyond a single object. A divided affection may be termed benevolence, but can hardly rise to friendship; for the narrow limits of the human mind allow it not intensely to contemplate more than one idea. As we love one more, we must love another less; and, however impartially we may, for a very short time, distribute our regards, the balance of affection will quickly incline, perhaps against our consent, to one side or the other. Besides, though we should love our friends equally, which is perhaps not possible; and each according to their merit, which is very difficult; what shall secure them from jealousy of each other? Will not each think highly of his own value, and imagine himself rated below his worth? Or what shall preserve their common friend from the same jealousy with regard to them? As he divides his affection and esteem between them, he can in return claim no more than a dividend of theirs; and as he regards them equally, they may justly rank some other in equality with him: and what then shall hinder an endless communication of confidence, which must certainly end in treachery at last? Let these reflections be applied to marriage, and perhaps polygamy may lose its vindicators.

It is remarked, that *Friendship amongst equals is the most lasting,*[b] and perhaps there are few causes to which more unhappy marriages are to be ascribed, than a disproportion between the original condition of the two persons. Dif-

[a] ὦ φίλοι οὐδὲ φίλος.

[b] Amicitia inter pares firmissima.

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ference of condition makes difference of education, and difference of education produces differences of habits, sentiments, and inclinations. Thence arise contrary views, and opposite schemes, of which the frequent, though not necessary, consequences, are debates, disgust, alienation, and settled hatred.

Strict friendship *is to have the same desires and the same aversions.*[c] Whoever is to choose a friend, is to consider first the resemblance or the dissimilitude of tempers. How necessary this caution is to be urged as preparatory to marriage, the misery of those who neglect it sufficiently evinces. To enumerate all the varieties of disposition, to which it may, on this occasion, be convenient to attend, would be a tedious task, but it is at least proper to enforce one precept on this head, a precept which was never yet broken without fatal consequences, *Let the religion of the man and woman be the same.* The rancour and hatred, the rage and persecution, with which religious disputes have filled the world, need not to be related; every history can inform us, that no malice is so fierce, so cruel, and implacable, as that which is excited by religious discord. It is to no purpose that they stipulate for the free enjoyment of their own opinion; for how can he be happy, who sees the person most dear to him in a state of dangerous errour, and ignorant of those sacred truths, which are necessary to the approbation of God, and to future felicity? How can he engage not to endeavour to propagate truth, and promote the salvation of those he loves; or if he has been betrayed into such engagements by an ungoverned passion, how can he vindicate himself in the observation of them? The education of children will soon make it necessary to determine, which of the two opinions shall be transmitted to their posterity; and how can either consent to train up in errour and delusion, those from whom they expect the highest satisfactions, and the only comforts of declining life?

[c] An observation of Catiline in Sallust.

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On account of this conformity of notions it is, that equality of condition is chiefly eligible; for as friendship, so marriage either finds or makes an equality. No disadvantage of birth or fortune ought to impede the exaltation of virtue and of wisdom; for with marriage begins union, and union obliterates all distinctions. It may, indeed, become the person who received the benefit, to remember it, that gratitude may heighten affection; but the person that conferred it ought to forget it, because, if it was deserved, it cannot be mentioned without injustice, nor, if undeserved, without imprudence. All reproaches of this kind must be either retractions of a good action, or proclamations of our own weakness.

Friends, says the proverbial observation, *have every thing in common*. This is likewise implied in the marriage covenant. Matrimony admits of no separate possessions, no incommunicable interests. This rule, like all others, has been often broken by low views and sordid stipulations; but, like all other precepts, founded on reason and in truth, it has received a new confirmation from almost every branch of it; and those parents, whose age has had no better effects upon their understanding, than to fill them with avarice and stratagem, have brought misery and ruin upon their children, by the means which they weakly imagined conducive to their happiness.

There is yet another precept equally relating to friendship and to marriage, a precept which, in either case, can never be too strongly inculcated, or too scrupulously observed; *Contract friendship only with the good*. Virtue is the first quality to be considered in the choice of a friend, and yet more in a fixed and irrevocable choice. This maxim surely requires no comment, nor any vindication; it is equally clear and certain, obvious to the superficial, and incontestable by the most accurate examiner. To dwell upon it is, therefore, superfluous; for, though often neglected, it never was denied. Every man will, without hesitation, confess, that it is absurd to trust a known deceiver, or voluntarily to depend for quiet and for happiness

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upon insolence, cruelty, and oppression. Thus marriage appears to differ from friendship chiefly in the degree of its efficacy, and the authority of its institution. It was appointed by God himself, as necessary to happiness, even in a state of innocence; and the relation produced by it was declared more powerful than that of birth, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." But as, notwithstanding its conformity to human nature, it sometimes fails to produce the effects intended, it is necessary to inquire,

SECONDLY: By what means the end of marriage is to be attained.

As it appears, by examining the natural system of the universe, that the greatest and smallest bodies are invested with the same properties, and moved by the same laws; so a survey of the moral world will inform us, that greater or less societies are to be made happy by the same means, and that, however relations may be varied, or circumstances changed, virtue, and virtue alone, is the parent of felicity. We can only, in whatsoever state we may be placed, secure ourselves from disquiet and from misery, by a resolute attention to truth and reason. Without this, it is in vain that a man chooses a friend, or cleaves to a wife. If passion be suffered to prevail over right, and the duties of our state be broken through, or neglected, for the sake of gratifying our anger, our pride, or our revenge; the union of hearts will quickly be dissolved, and kindness will give way to resentment and aversion.

The duties, by the practice of which a married life is to be made happy, are the same with those of friendship, but exalted to higher perfection. Love must be more ardent, and confidence without limits. It is, therefore, necessary on each part to deserve that confidence by the most unshaken fidelity, and to preserve their love unextinguished by continual acts of tenderness; not only to detest all real, but seeming offences; and to avoid suspicion and guilt, with almost equal solicitude.

But since the frailty of our nature is such, that we can-

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not hope from each other an unvaried rectitude of conduct, or an uninterrupted course of wisdom or virtue; as folly will sometimes intrude upon an unguarded hour; and temptations, by frequent attacks, will sometimes prevail; one of the chief acts of love is readily to forgive errours, and overlook defects. Neglect is to be reclaimed by kindness, and perverseness softened by complaisance. Sudden starts of passion are patiently to be borne, and the calm moments of recollection silently expected. For, if one offence be made a plea for another; if anger be to be opposed with anger, and reproach retorted for reproach; either the contest must be continued for ever, or one must at last be obliged by violence to do what might have been at first done, not only more gracefully, but with more advantage.

Marriage, however in general it resembles friendship, differs from it in this; that all its duties are not reciprocal. Friends are equal in every respect, but the relation of marriage produces authority on one side, and exacts obedience on the other; obedience, an unpleasing duty; which yet the nature of the state makes indispensable; for friends may separate when they can no longer reconcile the sentiments, or approve the schemes of each other; but as marriage is indissoluble, either one must be content to submit, when conviction cannot be obtained; or life must be wasted in perpetual disputes.

But though obedience may be justly required, servility is not to be exacted; and though it may be lawful to exert authority, it must be remembered, that to govern and to tyrannize are very different, and that oppression will naturally provoke rebellion.

The great rule both of authority and obedience is the law of God; a law which is not to be broken for the promotion of any ends, or in compliance with any commands; and which, indeed, never can be violated without destroying that confidence, which is the great source of mutual happiness; for how can that person be trusted, whom no principle obliges to fidelity?

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Thus religion appears, in every state of life, to be the basis of happiness, and the operating power which makes every good institution valid and efficacious. And he that shall attempt to attain happiness by the means which God has ordained; and "shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife," shall surely find the highest degree of satisfaction that our present state allows; if, in his choice, he pays the first regard to virtue, and regulates his conduct by the precepts of religion.

SERMON II.

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. lv. 7.

THAT God is a being of infinite mercy; that he desires not the death of a sinner, nor takes any pleasure in the misery of his creatures; may not only be deduced from the consideration of his nature, and his attributes; but, for the sake of those that are incapable of philosophical inquiries, who make far the greatest part of mankind, it is evidently revealed to us in the Scriptures, in which the supreme Being, the Source of life, the Author of existence, who spake the word, and the world was made, who commanded, and it was created, is described as looking down from the height of infinite felicity, with tenderness and pity, upon the sons of men; inciting them by soft impulses, to perseverance in virtue, and recalling them, by instruction and punishment, from errour and from vice. He is represented as not more formidable for his power, than amiable for his mercy; and is introduced as expostulating with mankind upon their obstinacy in wickedness; and warning them, with the highest affection, to

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avoid those punishments, which the laws of his government make it necessary to inflict upon the inflexible and disobedient. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. iii. 7. "Make you a new heart, and a new spirit, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezek. xviii. 31. His mercy is ever made the chief motive of obedience to him; and with the highest reason inculcated, as the attribute which may animate us most powerfully to an attention to our duty. "If thou, O Lord, wert extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who shall abide it? But there is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared." If God were a power unmerciful and severe, a rigid exactor of unvaried regularity and unfailing virtue; if he were not to be pleased but with perfection, nor to be pacified after transgressions and offences; in vain would the best men endeavour to recommend themselves to his favour; in vain would the most circumspect watch the motions of his own heart, and the most diligent apply himself to the exercise of virtue. They would only destroy their ease by ineffectual solicitude, confine their hearts with unnecessary restraints, and weary out their lives in unavailing labours. God would not be to be served, because all service would be rejected; it would be much more reasonable to abstract the mind from the contemplation of him, than to have him only before us, as an object of terrour, as a Being too mighty to be resisted, and too cruel to be implored; a Being that created men, only to be miserable, and revealed himself to them, only to interrupt even the transient and imperfect enjoyments of this life, to astonish them with terrour, and to overwhelm them with despair.

But there is mercy with him, therefore shall he be feared. It is reasonable, that we should endeavour to please him, because we know that every sincere endeavour will be rewarded by him; that we should use all the means in our power, to enlighten our minds, and regulate our lives, because our errours, if involuntary, will not be imputed to us; and our conduct, though not exactly agreeable to the

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divine ideas of rectitude, yet if approved, after honest and diligent inquiries, by our own consciences, will not be condemned by that God, who judges of the heart, weighs every circumstance of our lives, and admits every real extenuation of our failings and transgressions.

Were there not mercy with him, were he not to be reconciled after the commission of a crime, what must be the state of those, who are conscious of having once offended him? A state of gloomy melancholy, or outrageous desperation; a dismal weariness of life, and inexpressible agonies at the thought of death; for what affright or affliction could equal the horrours of that mind, which expected every moment to fall into the hands of implacable Omnipotence?

But the mercy of God extends not only to those who have made his will, in some degree, the rule of their actions, and have only deviated from it by inadvertency, surprise, inattention, or negligence, but even to those that have polluted themselves with studied and premeditated wickedness; that have violated his commands in opposition to conviction, and gone on, from crime to crime, under a sense of the divine disapprobation.

Even these are not for ever excluded from his favour, but have in their hands means, appointed by himself, of reconciliation to him; means by which pardon may be obtained, and by which they may be restored to those hopes of happiness, from which they have fallen by their own fault.

The great duty to the performance of which these benefits are promised, is repentance; a duty, which is of the utmost importance to every man to understand and practise, and which it, therefore, may be necessary to explain and enforce, by showing,

FIRST: What is the true nature of repentance.

SECONDLY: What are the obligations to an early repentance.

FIRST: What is the true nature of repentance.

The duty of repentance, like most other parts of reli-

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gion, has been misrepresented by the weakness of superstition, or the artifices of interest. The clearest precepts have been obscured by false interpretations, and one errour added to another, till the understanding of men has been bewildered, and their morals depraved, by a false appearance of religion.

Repentance has been made, by some, to consist in the outward expressions of sorrow for sin, in tears and sighs, in dejection and lamentation.

It must be owned that where the crime is publick, and where others may be in danger of corruption from the example, some publick and open declarations of repentance may be proper, if made with decency and propriety, which are necessary to preserve the best actions from contempt and ridicule; but they are necessary only, for the sake of destroying the influence of a bad example, and are no otherwise essential to this duty. No man is obliged to accuse himself of crimes, which are known to God alone; even the fear of hurting others ought often to restrain him from it, since to confess crimes may be, in some measure, to teach them, and those may imitate him in wickedness, who will not follow him in his repentance.

It seems here not impertinent to mention the practice of private confession to the priest, indispensably enjoined by the Roman church, as absolutely necessary to true repentance; but which is no where commanded in Scripture, or recommended otherwise, than as a method of disburdening the conscience, for the sake of receiving comfort or instruction, and as such is directed by our own liturgy.

Thus much, and no more, seems to be implied in the apostle's precept, "of confessing our faults one to another," a precept expressed with such latitude, that it appears only to be one of those which it may be often convenient to observe, but which is to be observed no farther than as it may be convenient. For we are left entirely at liberty, what terms, whether general or particular, we shall use in our confessions. The precept, in a literal and rational sense, can be said to direct no more, than general

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acts of humiliation, and acknowledgements of our own depravity.

No man ought to judge of the efficacy of his own repentance, or the sincerity of another's, by such variable and uncertain tokens, as proceed more from the constitution of the body than the disposition of the mind, or more from sudden passions and violent emotions, than from a fixed temper, or settled resolutions. Tears are often to be found, where there is little sorrow, and the deepest sorrow without any tears. Even sorrow itself is no other than an accidental, or a secondary, part of repentance, which may, and, indeed, ought to arise from the consciousness of our own guilt; but which is merely a natural and necessary effect, in which choice has very little part, and which, therefore, is no virtue. He that feels no sorrow for sin has, indeed, great reason to doubt of the sincerity of his own repentance, since he seems not to be truly sensible of his danger and his misery; but he that feels it in the highest degree is not to put confidence in it. He is only to expect mercy upon his reformation.

For reformation is the chief part of repentance; not he that only bewails and confesses, but he that forsakes his sins, repents acceptably to God, that God who "will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" who will only accept a pure heart and real virtue, not outward forms of grief, or pompous solemnities of devotion. To conceive that any thing can be substituted in the place of reformation is a dangerous and fatal, though perhaps no uncommon errour; nor is it less erroneous, though less destructive, to suppose, that any thing can be added to the efficacy of a good life by a conformity to any extraordinary ceremonies or particular institutions.

To false notions of repentance many nations owe the custom, which prevails amongst them, of retiring, in the decline of life, to solitudes and cloisters, to atone for wickedness by penance and mortifications. It must, indeed, be confessed, that it may be prudent in a man, long accustomed to yield to particular temptations, to remove

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himself from them as far as he can, because every passion is more strong or violent, as its particular object is more near. Thus it would be madness in a man, long enslaved by intemperance, to frequent revels and banquets with an intent to reform; nor can it be expected that cruelty and tyranny should be corrected by continuance in high authority.

That particular state which contributes most to excite and stimulate our inordinate passions, may be changed with very good effect; but any retirement from the world does not necessarily precede or follow repentance, because it is not requisite to reformation. A man, whose conscience accuses him of having perverted others, seems under some obligations to continue in the world, and to practise virtue in publick, that those who have been seduced by his example, may by his example be reclaimed.

For reformation includes, not only the forbearance of those crimes of which we have been guilty, and the practice of those duties which we have hitherto neglected, but a reparation, as far as we are able to make it, of all the injuries that we have done, either to mankind in general, or to particular persons. If we have been guilty of the open propagation of errour, or the promulgation of falsehood, we must make our recantation no less openly; we must endeavour, without regard to the shame and reproach to which we may be exposed, to undeceive those whom we have formerly misled. If we have deprived any man of his right, we must restore it to him; if we have aspersed his reputation, we must retract our calumny. Whatever can be done to obviate the ill consequences of our past misconduct, must be diligently and steadily practised. Whoever has been made vitious or unhappy by our fault, must be restored to virtue and happiness, so far as our counsel or fortune can contribute to it.

Let no man imagine that he may indulge his malice, his avarice, or his ambition, at the expense of others; that he may raise himself to wealth and honour by the breach of every law of heaven and earth, then retire, laden

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with the plunder of the miserable, spend his life in fantastick penances, or false devotion, and by his compliance with the external duties of religion, atone for withholding what he has torn away from the lawful possessour by rapine and extortion: let him not flatter himself with false persuasions that prayer and mortification can alter the great and invariable rules of reason and justice: let him not think that he can acquire a right to keep what he had no right to take away, or that frequent prostrations before God will justify his perseverance in oppressing men: let him be assured that his presence profanes the temple, and that his prayer will be turned into sin.

A frequent and serious reflection upon the necessity of reparation and restitution, may be very effectual to restrain men from injustice and defamation, from cruelty and extortion; for nothing is more certain, than that most propose themselves to die the death of the righteous, and intend, however they may offend God in the pursuit of their interest, or the gratification of their passions, to reconcile themselves to him by repentance. Would men, therefore, deeply imprint upon their minds the true notions of repentance in its whole extent, many temptations would lose their force; for who would utter a falsehood, which he must shamefully retract, or take away, at the expense of his reputation and his innocence, what, if he hopes for eternal happiness, he must afterwards restore? Who would commit a crime, of which he must retain the guilt, but lose the advantage?

There is, indeed, a partial restitution, with which many have attempted to quiet their consciences, and have betrayed their own souls. When they are sufficiently enriched by wicked practices, and leave off to rob from satiety of wealth, or are awakened to reflection upon their own lives by danger, adversity, or sickness, they then become desirous to be at peace with God, and hope to obtain, by refunding part of their acquisitions, a permission to enjoy the rest. In pursuance of this view churches are built, schools endowed, the poor clothed, and the ignorant edu-

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cated; works, indeed, highly pleasing to God, when performed in concurrence with the other duties of religion, but which will never atone for the violation of justice. To plunder one man for the sake of relieving another, is not charity; to build temples with the gains of wickedness, is to endeavour to bribe the Divinity. This ought ye to have done, and not left the other undone. Ye ought, doubtless to be charitable, but ye ought first to be just.

There are others who consider God as a Judge still more easily reconciled to crimes, and, therefore, perform their acts of atonement after death, and destine their estates to charity, when they can serve the end of luxury or vanity no longer. But whoever he be that has loaded his soul with the spoils of the unhappy, and riots in affluence by cruelty and injustice, let him not be deceived! God is not mocked. Restitution must be made to those who have been wronged, and whatever he withholds from them, he withholds at the hazard of eternal happiness.

An amendment of life is the chief and essential part of repentance. He that has performed that great work needs not disturb his conscience with subtile scruples, or nice distinctions. He needs not recollect, whether he was awakened from the lethargy of sin by the love of God, or the fear of punishment. The Scripture applies to all our passions: and eternal punishments had been threatened to no purpose, if these menaces were not intended to promote virtue.

But as this reformation is not to be accomplished by our own natural power, unassisted by God, we must, when we form our first resolutions of a new life, apply ourselves, with fervour and constancy, to those means which God has prescribed for obtaining his assistance. We must implore a blessing by frequent prayer, and confirm our faith by the holy sacrament. We must use all those institutions that contribute to the increase of piety, and omit nothing that may either promote our progress in virtue, or prevent a lapse into vice. It may be in-

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quired whether a repentance begun in sickness, and prevented by death from exerting its influence upon the conduct, will avail in the sight of God. To this question it may be answered in general, that as all reformation is begun by a change of the temper and inclinations, which, when altered to a certain degree, necessarily produces an alteration in the life and manners; if God, who sees the heart, sees it rectified in such a manner as would consequently produce a good life, he will accept that repentance.

But it is of the highest importance to those who have so long delayed to secure their salvation, that they lose none of the moments which yet remain; that they omit no act of justice or mercy now in their power; that they summon all their diligence to improve the remains of life, and exert every virtue which they have opportunities to practise. And when they have done all that can possibly be done by them, they cannot yet be certain of acceptance, because they cannot know, whether a repentance, proceeding wholly from the fear of death, would not languish and cease to operate, if that fear was taken away.

Since, therefore, such is the hazard and uncertain efficacy of repentance long delayed, let us seriously reflect,

SECONDLY: Upon the obligations to an early repentance.

He is esteemed by the prudent and the diligent to be no good regulator of his private affairs, who defers till to-morrow what is necessary to be done, and what it is in his power to do to-day. The obligation would still be stronger, if we suppose that the present is the only day in which he knows it will be in his power. This is the case of every man, who delays to reform his life, and lulls himself in the supineness of iniquity. He knows not that the opportunities he now rejects will ever be again offered him, or that they will not be denied him, because he has rejected them. This he certainly knows, that life is continually stealing from him, and that every day cuts off some

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part of that time which is already, perhaps, almost at an end.

But the time not only grows every day shorter, but the work to be performed in it more difficult; every hour, in which repentance is delayed, produces something new to be repented of. Habits grow stronger by long continuance, and passions more violent by indulgence. Vice, by repeated acts, becomes almost natural; and pleasures, by frequent enjoyment, captivate the mind almost beyond resistance.

If avarice has been the predominant passion, and wealth has been accumulated by extortion and rapacity, repentance is not to be postponed. Acquisitions, long enjoyed, are with great difficulty quitted; with so great difficulty, that we seldom, very seldom, meet with true repentance in those whom the desire of riches has betrayed to wickedness. Men who could willingly resign the luxuries and sensual pleasures of a large fortune, cannot consent to live without the grandeur and the homage. And they who would leave all, cannot bear the reproach which they apprehend from such an acknowledgement of wrong.

Thus are men withheld from repentance, and, consequently, debarred from eternal felicity; but these reasons, being founded in temporal interests, acquire every day greater strength to mislead us, though not greater efficacy to justify us. A man may, by fondly indulging a false notion, voluntarily forget that it is false, but can never make it true. We must banish every false argument, every known delusion from our minds, before our passions can operate in its favour; and forsake what we know must be forsaken, before we have endeared it to ourselves by long possession. Repentance is always difficult, and the difficulty grows still greater by delay. But let those who have hitherto neglected this great duty, remember, that it is yet in their power, and that they cannot perish everlastingly but by their own choice! Let them, therefore endeavour to redeem the time lost, and repair their negligence by vigilance and ardour! "Let the wicked

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forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

SERMON III.

"Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief." PROV. xxviii. 14.

THE great purpose of revealed religion is to afford man a clear representation of his dependence on the Supreme Being, by teaching him to consider God as his Creator and Governour, his Father and his Judge. Those, to whom providence has granted the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, have no need to perplex themselves with difficult speculations, to deduce their duty from remote principles, or to enforce it by doubtful motives. The Bible tells us, in plain and authoritative terms, that there is a way to life, and a way to death; that there are acts which God will reward, and acts that he will punish. That with soberness, righteousness, and godliness, God will be pleased; and that with intemperance, iniquity, and impiety, God will be offended; and that, of those who are careful to please him, the reward will be such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and of those who, having offended him, die without repentance, the punishment will be inconceivably severe, and dreadful.

In consequence of this general doctrine, the whole system of moral religious duty is expressed, in the language of Scripture, by the "fear of God." A good man is characterised, as a man that feareth God; and the fear of the Lord is said to be the beginning of wisdom; and the text affirms, that happy is the man that feareth always.

On the distinction of this fear, into servile and filial, or

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fear of punishment, or fear of offence, on which much has been superstructed by the casuistical theology of the Romish church, it is not necessary to dwell. It is sufficient to observe, that the religion which makes fear the great principle of action, implicitly condemns all self-confidence, all presumptuous security; and enjoins a constant state of vigilance and caution, a perpetual distrust of our own hearts, a full conviction of our natural weakness, and an earnest solicitude for Divine assistance.

The philosophers of the heathen world seemed to hope, that man might be flattered into virtue, and therefore told him much of his rank, and of the meanness of degeneracy; they asserted, indeed with truth, that all greatness was in the practice of virtue; but of virtue their notions were narrow; and pride, which their doctrine made its chief support, was not of power sufficient to struggle with sense or passion.

Of that religion, which has been taught from God, the basis is humility; a holy fear which attends good men, through the whole course of their lives; and keeps them always attentive to the motives and consequences of every action; if always unsatisfied with their progress in holiness, always wishing to advance, and always afraid of falling away.

This fear is of such efficacy to the great purpose of our being, that the wise man has pronounced him happy that fears always; and declares, that he, who hardens his heart, shall fall into mischief. Let us, therefore, carefully consider,

FIRST: What he is to fear, whose fear will make him happy.

SECONDLY: What is that hardness of heart which ends in mischief.

THIRDLY: How the heart is hardened. And,

FOURTHLY: What is the consequence of hardness of heart.

FIRST: We must inquire, what he is to fear, whose fear will make him happy.

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The great and primary object of a good man's fear is sin; and, in proportion to the atrociousness of the crime, he will shrink from it with more horrour. When he meditates on the infinite perfection of his Maker and his Judge; when he considers, that the heavens are not pure in the sight of God, and yet remembers, that he must in a short time appear before him; he dreads the contamination of evil, and endeavours to pass through his appointed time, with such cautions, as may keep him unspotted from the world.

The dread of sin necessarily produces the dread of temptation: he, that wishes to escape the effect, flies likewise from the cause. The humility of a man truly religious, seldom suffers him to think himself able to resist those incitements to evil, which, by the approach of immediate gratifications, may be presented to sense or fancy; his care is not for victory, but safety; and, when he can *escape* assaults, he does not willingly *encounter* them.

The continual occurrence of temptation, and that imbecility of nature, which every man sees in others, and has experienced in himself, seems to have made many doubtful of the possibility of salvation. In the common modes of life, they find that business ensnares, and that pleasure seduces; that success produces pride, and miscarriage envy; that conversation consists too often of censure or of flattery; and, that even care for the interests of friends, or attention to the establishment of a family, generates contest and competition, enmity and malevolence, and at last fills the mind with secular solicitude.

Under the terrours which this prospect of the world has impressed upon them, many have endeavoured to secure their innocence, by excluding the possibility of crimes; and have fled for refuge, from vanity and sin, to the solitude of deserts; where they have passed their time in woods and caverns; and, after a life of labour and maceration, prayer and penitence, died at last in secrecy and silence.

Many more, of both sexes, have withdrawn, and still

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withdraw themselves, from crowds and glitter, and pleasure, to monasteries and convents; where they engage themselves, by irrevocable vows, in certain modes of life, more or less austere, according to the several institutions; but all of them comprising many positive hardships, and all prohibiting almost all sensual gratifications. The fundamental and general principle of all monastick communities, is celibacy, poverty, and obedience to the superiour. In some, there is a perpetual abstinence from all food that may join delight with nourishment; to which, in others, is added an obligation to silence and solitude;—to suffer, to watch, and to pray, is their whole employment.

Of these, it must be confessed, that they fear always, and that they escape many temptations, to which all are exposed, and by which many fall, who venture themselves into the whirl of human affairs; they are exempt from avarice, and all its concomitants, and, by allowing themselves to possess nothing, they are free from those contests for honour and power, which fill the open world with stratagems and violence. But surely it cannot be said that they have reached the perfection of a religious life; it cannot be allowed, that flight is victory; or that he fills his place in the creation laudably, who does no ill, *only* because he does *nothing*. Those who live upon that which is produced by the labour of others, could not live, if there were none to labour; and, if celibacy could be universal, the race of man must soon have an end.

Of these recluses, it may, without uncharitable censure, be affirmed; that they have secured their innocence, by the loss of their virtue; that, to avoid the commission of some faults, they have made many duties impracticable; and that, lest they should do what they ought *not* to do, they leave much *undone*, which they ought to *do*. They must, however, be allowed to express a just sense of the dangers with which we are surrounded; and a strong conviction of the vigilance necessary to obtain salvation; and it is our business to avoid their errours, and imitate their piety.

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He is happy that carries about with him in the world the temper of the cloister; and preserves the fear of doing evil, while he suffers himself to be impelled by the zeal of doing good; who uses the comforts and the conveniencies of his condition as though he used them not, with that constant desire of a better state, which sinks the value of earthly things; who can be rich or poor, without pride in riches, or discontent in poverty; who can manage the business of this life with such indifference as may shut out from his heart all incitements to fraud or injustice; who can partake the pleasures of sense with temperance, and enjoy the distinctions of honour with moderation; who can pass undefiled through a polluted world; and, among all the vicissitudes of good and evil, have his heart fixed only where true joys are to be found.

This can only be done, by fearing always, by preserving in the mind a constant apprehension of the Divine presence, and a constant dread of the Divine displeasure; impressions which the converse of mankind, and the solicitations of sense and fancy, are continually labouring to efface, and which we must, therefore, renew by all such practices as religion prescribes; and which may be learned from the lives of them, who have been distinguished, as examples of piety, by the general approbation of the Christian world.

The great efficient of union, between the soul and its Creator, is prayer; of which the necessity is such, that St. Paul directs us, to pray without ceasing; that is, to preserve in the mind such a constant dependence upon God, and such a constant desire of his assistance, as may be equivalent to constant prayer.

No man can pray with ardour of devotion, but he must excite in himself a reverential idea of that Power, to whom he addresses his petitions; nor can he suddenly reconcile himself to an action, by which he shall displease him, to whom he has been returning thanks for his creation and preservation, and by whom he hopes to be still preserved. He therefore, who prays often, fortifies himself by a natu-

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ral effect, and may hope to be preserved in safety, by the stronger aid of Divine protection.

Besides the returns of daily and regular prayer, it will be necessary for most men to assist themselves, from time to time, by some particular and unaccustomed acts of devotion. For this purpose, intervals of retirement may be properly recommended; in which the dust of life may be shaken off, and in which the course of life may be properly reviewed, and its future possibilities estimated. At such times secular temptations are removed, and earthly cares are dismissed; a vain transitory world may be contemplated in its true state; past offences may obtain pardon by repentance; new resolutions may be formed, upon new convictions; the past may supply instruction to the present and to the future; and such preparation may be made for those events, which threaten spiritual danger, that temptation cannot easily come unexpected; and interest and pleasure, whenever they renew their attacks, will find the soul upon its guard, with either caution to avoid, or vigour to repel them.

In these seasons of retreat and recollection, what external helps shall be added, must by every one be discretely and soberly considered. Fasts and other austerities, however they have been brought into disrepute by wild enthusiasm, have been always recommended, and always practised by the sincere believers of revealed religion; and, as they have a natural tendency to disengage the mind from sensuality, they may be of great use, as awakeners of holy fear; and they may assist our progress in a good life, while they are considered only as expressions of our love of God, and are not substituted for the love of our neighbours.

As all those duties are to be practised, lest the heart should be hardened, we are to consider,

SECONDLY: What is meant by hardness of heart.

It is apparent from the text, that the hardness of heart, which betrays to mischief, is contrary to the fear which secures happiness. The fear of God, is a certain tender-

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ness of spirit, which shrinks from evil, and the causes of evil; such a sense of God's presence, and such persuasion of his justice, as gives sin the appearance of evil, and therefore excites every effort to combat and escape it.

Hardness of heart, therefore, is a thoughtless neglect of the Divine law: such an acquiescence in the pleasures of sense, and such delight in the pride of life, as leaves no place in the mind for meditation on higher things; such an indifference about the last event of human actions, as never looks forward to a future state, but suffers the passions to operate with their full force, without any other end, than the gratification of the present world.

To men of hearts thus hardened, providence is seldom wholly inattentive; they are often called to the remembrance of their Creator, both by blessings and afflictions; by recoveries from sickness, by deliverances from danger, by loss of friends, and by miscarriage of transactions. As these calls are neglected, the hardness is increased, and there is danger, lest he whom they have refused to hear, should call them no more.

This state of dereliction is the highest degree of misery; and, since it is so much to be dreaded, all approaches to it are diligently to be avoided. It is, therefore, necessary to inquire,

THIRDLY: How, or by what causes, the heart is hardened.

The most dangerous hardness of heart is that which proceeds from some enormous wickedness, of which the criminal dreads the recollection, because he cannot prevail upon himself to repair the injury; or because he dreads the irruption of those images, by which guilt must always be accompanied; and, finding a temporal ease in negligence and forgetfulness, by degrees confirms himself in stubborn impenitence.

This is the most dreadful and deplorable state of the heart; but this I hope is not very common. That which frequently occurs, though very dangerous, is not desperate; since it consists, not in the perversion of the will, but in

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the alienation of the thoughts; by such hearts God is not defied, he is only forgotten. Of this forgetfulness, the general causes are worldly cares and sensual pleasures. If there is a man, of whose soul avarice or ambition have complete possession, and who places his hope in riches or advancement, he will be employed in bargains, or in schemes, and make no excursion into remote futurity, nor consider the time, in which the rich and the poor shall lie down together; when all temporal advantages shall forsake him, and he shall appear before the supreme tribunal of eternal justice. The slave of pleasure soon sinks into a kind of voluptuous dotage; intoxicated with present delights, and careless of every thing else; his days and his nights glide away in luxury or in vice, and he has no cure, but to keep thought away; for thought is always troublesome to him, who lives without his own approbation.

That such men are not roused to the knowledge and the consideration of their real state, will appear less strange, when it is observed, that they are almost always either stupidly, or profanely, negligent of those external duties of religion, which are instituted to excite and preserve the fear of God. By perpetual absence from publick worship, they miss all opportunities, which the pious wisdom of Christianity has afforded them, of comparing their lives with the rules which the Scripture contains; and awakening their attention to the presence of God, by hearing him invoked, and joining their own voices in the common supplication. That carelessness of the world to come, which first suffered them to omit the duties of devotion, is by that omission, hourly increased; and, having first neglected the means of holiness, they in time do not remember them.

A great part of them whose hearts are thus hardened, may justly impute that insensibility to the violation of the Sabbath. He that keeps one day in the week holy, has not time to become profligate, before the returning day of recollection reinstates his principles, and renews his cau-

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tion. This is the benefit of periodical worship. But he, to whom all days are alike, will find no day for prayer and repentance.

Many enjoyments, innocent in themselves, may become dangerous by too much frequency; publick spectacles, convivial entertainments, domestick games, sports of the field, or gay or ludicrous conversation, all of them harmless, and some of them useful, while they are regulated by religious prudence, may yet become pernicious, when they pass their bounds, and usurp too much of that time which is given us, that we may work out our salvation.

And surely, whatever may diminish the fear of God, or abate the tenderness of conscience, must be diligently avoided by those who remember what is to be explained,

FOURTHLY: The consequence of hardness of heart.

He that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief. Whether mischief be considered, as immediately signifying wickedness, or misery, the sense is eventually the same. Misery is the effect of wickedness, and wickedness is the cause of misery; and he that hardeneth his heart shall be both wicked and miserable. Wicked he will doubtless be, for he that has lost the fear of God, has nothing by which he can oppose temptation. He has a breast open and exposed, of which interest or voluptuousness take easy possession. He is the slave of his own desires, and the sport of his own passions. He acts without a rule of action, and he determines without any true principle of judgment. If he who fears always, who preserves in his mind a constant sense of the danger of sin, is yet often assaulted, and sometimes overpowered by temptation; what can be hoped for him, that has the same temptation, without the same defence? He who hardens his heart will certainly be wicked, and it necessarily follows, that he will certainly be miserable. The doom of the obstinate and impenitent sinner is plainly declared; it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Let us all, therefore, watch our thoughts and actions; and that we may not, by hardness of heart fall into mis-

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chief, let us endeavour and pray, that we may be among them that feared always, and by that fear may be prepared for everlasting happiness.

SERMON IV.

"Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward." Isa. lviii. 7, 8.

If the necessity of every duty is to be estimated by the frequency with which it is inculcated, and the sanctions by which it is enforced; if the great Lawgiver of the universe, whose will is immutable, and whose decrees are established for ever, may be supposed to regard, in a particular manner, the observation of those commands, which seem to be repeated only that they may be strongly impressed, and secured, by an habitual submission, from violation and neglect, there is scarcely any virtue, that we ought more diligently to exercise than that of compassion to the needy and distressed.

If we look into the state of mankind, and endeavour to deduce the will of God from the visible disposition of things, we find no duty more necessary to the support of order, and the happiness of society, nor any, of which we are more often reminded, by opportunities of practising it, or which is more strongly urged upon us, by importunate solicitations, and affecting objects.

If we inquire into the opinions of those men, on whom God conferred superiour wisdom, in the heathen world, all their suffrages will be found united in this great point. Amidst all their wild opinions, and chimerical systems, the sallies of unguided imagination, and the errours of be-

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wildered reason; they have all endeavoured to evince the necessity of beneficence, and agreed to assign the first rank of excellence to him, who most contributes to improve the happiness, and to soften the miseries of life.

But we, who are blessed with clearer light, and taught to know the will of our Maker, not from long deductions from variable appearances, or intricate disquisitions of fallible reason, but by messengers inspired by himself, and enabled to prove their mission by works above the power of created beings, may spare ourselves the labour of tedious inquiries. The Holy Scriptures are in our hands; the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation, and by them we may be sufficiently informed of the extent and importance of this great duty; a duty enjoined, explained, and enforced, by Moses and the Prophets, by the Evangelists and Apostles, by the precepts of Solomon, and the example of Christ.

From those, to whom large possessions have been transmitted by their ancestors, or whose industry has been blessed with success, God always requires the tribute of charity: he commands, that what he has given be enjoyed in imitating his bounty, in dispensing happiness, and cheering poverty, in easing the pains of disease, and lightening the burden of oppression; he commands that the superfluity of bread be dealt to the hungry; and the raiment, which the possessour cannot use, be bestowed upon the naked, and that no man turn away from his own flesh.

This is a tribute, which it is difficult to imagine that any man can be unwilling to pay, as an acknowledgement of his dependence upon the universal Benefactor, and an humble testimony of his confidence in that protection, without which, the strongest foundations of human power must fail, at the first shock of adversity, and the highest fabricks of earthly greatness sink into ruin; without which, wealth is only a floating vapour, and policy an empty sound.

But such is the prevalence of temptations, not early

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resisted; such the depravity of minds, by which unlawful desires have been long indulged, and false appearances of happiness pursued with ardour and pertinaciousness; so much are we influenced by example, and so diligently do we labour to deceive ourselves, that it is not uncommon to find the sentiments of benevolence almost extinguished, and all regard to the welfare of others overborn by a perpetual attention to immediate advantage and contracted views of present interest.

When any man has sunk into a state of insensibility like this, when he has learned to act only by the impulse of apparent profit, when he can look upon distress, without partaking it, and hear the cries of poverty and sickness, without a wish to relieve them; when he has so far disordered his ideas as to value wealth without regard to its end, and to amass with eagerness what is of no use in his hands; he is, indeed, not easily to be reclaimed; his reason, as well as his passions, is in combination against his soul, and there is little hope, that either persuasion will soften, or arguments convince him. A man, once hardened in cruelty by inveterate avarice, is scarcely to be considered as any longer human; nor is it to be hoped, that any impression can be made upon him, by methods applicable only to reasonable beings. Beneficence and compassion can be awakened in such hearts only by the operation of Divine grace, and must be the effect of a miracle, like that which turned the dry rock into a springing well.

Let every one, that considers this state of obdurate wickedness, that is struck with horrour at the mention of a man void of pity, that feels resentment at the name of oppression, and melts with sorrow at the voice of misery, remember that those, who have now lost all these sentiments, were originally formed with passions, and instincts, and reason, like his own: let him reflect, that he, who now stands most firmly, may fall by negligence, and that negligence arises from security. Let him, therefore, observe, by what gradations men sink into perdition, by what insensible deviations they wander from the ways of virtue,

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till they are at length scarce able to return; and let him be warned by their example, to avoid the original causes of depravity, and repel the first attacks of unreasonable self-love; let him meditate on the excellence of charity, and improve those seeds of benevolence, which are implanted in every mind, but which will not produce fruit, without care and cultivation.

Such meditations are always necessary for the promotion of virtue; for a careless and inattentive mind easily forgets its importance, and it will be practised only with a degree of ardour, proportioned to the sense of our obligations to it.

To assist such reflections, to confirm the benevolence of the liberal, and to show those who have lived without regard to the necessities of others, the absurdity of their conduct, I shall inquire,

FIRST: Into the nature of charity; and,

SECONDLY: Into the advantages arising from the exercise of it.

FIRST: I shall inquire into the nature of charity.

By charity, is to be understood, every assistance of weakness, or supply of wants, produced by a desire of benefiting others, and of pleasing God. Not every act of liberality, every increase of the wealth of another, not every flow of negligent profusion, or thoughtless start of sudden munificence, is to be dignified with this venerable name. There are many motives to the appearance of bounty, very different from those of true charity, and which, with whatever success they may be imposed upon mankind, will be distinguished at the last day by him to whom all hearts are open. It is not impossible, that men whose chief desire is esteem and applause, who court the favour of the multitude, and think fame the great end of action, may squander their wealth in such a manner, that some part of it may benefit the virtuous or the miserable; but as the guilt, so the virtue, of every action, arises from design; and those blessings which are bestowed by chance, will be of very little advantage to him that scattered them

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with no other prospect than that of hearing his own praises; praises, of which he will not be often disappointed, but of which our Lord has determined, that they shall be his reward. If any man, in the distribution of his favours, finds the desire of engaging gratitude, or gaining affection, to predominate in his mind; if he finds his benevolence weakened, by observing that his favours are forgotten, and that those whom he has most studiously benefited, are often least zealous for his service, he ought to remember, that he is not acting upon the proper motives of charity. For true charity arises from faith in the promises of God, and expects rewards only in a future state. To hope for our recompense in this life, is not beneficence, but usury.

And surely charity may easily subsist, without temporal motives, when it is considered, that it is by the exercise of charity alone that we are enabled to receive any solid advantage from present prosperity, and to appropriate to ourselves any possession beyond the possibility of losing it. Of the uncertainty of success, and the instability of greatness, we have examples every day before us. Scarcely can any man turn his eyes upon the world, without observing the sudden rotations of affairs, the ruin of the affluent, and the downfal of the high; and it may reasonably be hoped, that no man, to whom opportunities of such observations occur, can forbear applying them to his own condition, and reflecting, that what he now contemplates in another, he may, in a few days, experience himself.

By these reflections, he must be naturally led to inquire, how he may fix such fugitive advantages; how he shall hinder his wealth from flying away, and leaving him nothing but melancholy, disappointment, and remorse. This he can effect only by the practice of charity, by dealing his bread to the hungry, and bringing the poor that is cast out to his house. By these means only he can lay up for himself treasures in heaven, "where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal." By a liberal distribution of his riches, he can

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place them above the reach of the spoiler, and exempt them from accident and danger; can purchase to himself that satisfaction which no power on earth can take away; and make them the means of happiness, when they are no longer in his hands. He may procure, by this means of his wealth, what he will find to be obtained by no other method of applying it, an alleviation of the sorrows of age, of the pains of sickness, and of the agonies of death.

To enforce the duty of charity, it is so far from being necessary to produce any arguments drawn from a narrow view of our condition, a view restrained to this world, that the chief reason for which it is to be practised is the shortness and uncertainty of life. To a man who considers for what purpose he was created, and why he was placed in his present state, how short a time, at most, is allotted to his earthly duration, and how much of that time may be cut off; how can any thing give real satisfaction that terminates in this life? How can he imagine that any acquisition can deserve his labour, which has no tendency to the perfection of his mind? Or how can any enjoyment engage his desires, but that of a pure conscience, and reasonable expectations of a more happy and permanent existence? Whatever superiority may distinguish us, and whatever plenty may surround us, we know that they can be possessed but a short time, and that the manner in which we employ them must determine our eternal state; and what need can there be of any other argument for the use of them, agreeable to the command of him that bestowed them? What stronger incitement can any man require to a due consideration of the poor and needy, than that the Lord will deliver him in the day of trouble; in that day when the shadow of death shall compass him about, and all the vanities of the world shall fade away, when all the comforts of this life shall forsake him, when pleasure shall no longer delight, nor power protect him? In that dreadful hour, shall the man, whose care has been extended to the general happiness of mankind, whose charity has rescued sickness from the grave, and poverty

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from the dungeon; who has heard the groans of the aged struggling with misfortunes, and the cries of infants, languishing with hunger, find favour in the sight of the great Author of society, and his recompense shall flow upon him from the fountain of mercy; he shall stand without fear, on the brink of life, and pass into eternity, with an humble confidence of finding that mercy which he has never denied. His righteousness shall go before him, and the glory of the Lord shall be his rereward.

These blessings, and these rewards, are to be gained by the due use of riches; but they are not confined to the rich, or unattainable by those whom providence has placed in lower stations. Charity is an universal duty, which it is in every man's power sometimes to practise; since every degree of assistance given to another, upon proper motives, is an act of charity; and there is scarcely any man, in such a state of imbecility, as that he may not, on some occasions, benefit his neighbour. He that cannot relieve the poor may instruct the ignorant; and he that cannot attend the sick may reclaim the vitious. He that can give little assistance himself, may yet perform the duty of charity, by inflaming the ardour of others, and recommending the petitions, which he cannot grant, to those who have more to bestow. The widow that shall give her mite to the treasury, the poor man who shall bring to the thirsty a cup of cold water, shall not lose their reward.

And that this reward is not without reason decreed to the beneficent, and that the duty of charity is not exalted above its natural dignity and importance, will appear, by considering,

SECONDLY: The benefits arising from the exercise of charity.

The chief advantage which is received by mankind from the practice of charity, is the promotion of virtue amongst those who are most exposed to such temptations as it is not easy to surmount; temptations, of which no man can say that he should be able to resist them, and of

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which it is not easy for any one that has not known them, to estimate the force, and represent the danger.

We see, every day, men blessed with abundance, and reveling indelight, yet overborn by ungovernable desires of increasing their acquisitions; and breaking through the boundaries of religion, to pile heaps on heaps, and add one superfluity to another, to obtain only nominal advantages and imaginary pleasures.

For these we see friendships broken, justice violated, and nature forgotten; we see crimes committed, without the prospect of obtaining any positive pleasure, or removing any real pain. We see men toiling through meanness and guilt, to obtain that which they can enjoy only in idea, and which will supply them with nothing real which they do not already abundantly possess.

If men formed by education and enlightened by experience, men whose observations of the world cannot but have shown them the necessity of virtue, and who are able to discover the enormity of wickedness, by tracing its original, and pursuing its consequences, can fall before such temptations, and, in opposition to knowledge and conviction, prefer to the happiness of pleasing God the flatteries of dependents, or the smiles of power; what may not be expected from him who is pushed forward into sin by the impulse of poverty, who lives in continual want of what he sees wasted by thousands in negligent extravagance, and whose pain is every moment aggravated by the contempt of those whom nature has subjected to the same necessities with himself, and who are only his superiour by that wealth which they know not how to possess with moderation or decency?

How strongly may such a man be tempted to declare war upon the prosperous and the great! With what obstinacy and fury may he rush on from one outrage to another, impelled on one part by the pressure of necessity, and attracted on the other by the prospect of happiness; of happiness, which he sees sufficient to elevate those that possess it above the consideration of their own nature,

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and to turn them away from their own flesh; that happiness, which appears greater by being compared with his own misery, and which he admires the more because he cannot approach it. He that finds in himself every natural power of enjoyment, will envy the tables of the luxurious, and the splendour of the proud; he who feels the cold of nakedness, and the faintness of hunger, cannot but be provoked to snatch that bread which is devoured by excess, and that raiment which is only worn as the decoration of vanity. Resentment may easily combine with want, and incite him to return neglect with violence.

Such are the temptations of poverty; and who is there that can say, that he has not sometimes forsaken virtue upon weaker motives? Let any man reflect upon the snares to which poverty exposes virtue, and remember how certainly one crime makes way for another, till at last all distinction of good and evil is obliterated; and he will easily discover the necessity of charity to preserve a great part of mankind from the most atrocious wickedness.

The great rule of action, by which we are directed to do to others whatever we would that others should do to us, may be extended to God himself; whatever we ask of God, we ought to be ready to bestow on our neighbour; if we pray to be forgiven, we must forgive those that trespass against us; and is it not equally reasonable, when we implore from Providence our daily bread, that we deal our bread to the hungry? and that we rescue others from being betrayed by want into sin, when we pray that we may not ourselves be led into temptation?

Poverty, for the greatest part, produces ignorance; and ignorance facilitates the attack of temptation. For how should any man resist the solicitations of appetite, or the influence of passion, without any sense of their guilt, or dread of the punishment? How should he avoid the paths of vice, who never was directed to the way of virtue?

For this reason, no method of charity is more efficacious

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than that which at once enlightens ignorance and relieves poverty, that implants virtue in the mind, and wards off the blasts of indigence that might destroy it in the bloom. Such is the charity of which an opportunity is now offered; charity by which those who would probably, without assistance, be the burdens or terrours of the community, by growing up in idleness and vice, are enabled to support themselves by useful employments, and glorify God by reasonable service.

Such are the general motives which the religion of Jesus affords to the general exercise of charity, and such are the particular motives for our laying hold of the opportunity which providence has this day put into our power for the practice of it; motives, no less than the hope of everlasting happiness, and the fear of punishment which shall never end. Such incitements are surely sufficient to quicken the slowest, and animate the coldest; and if there can be imagined any place in which they must be more eminently prevalent, it must be the place[q] where we now reside. The numerous frequenters of this place constitute a mixed assemblage of the happy and the miserable. Part of this audience has resorted hither to alleviate the miseries of sickness, and part to divert the satiety of pleasure; part because they are disabled, by diseases, to prosecute the employment of their station, and part because their station has allotted them, in their own opinion, no other business than to pursue their pleasures. Part have exhausted the medicines, and part have worn out the delights of every other place; and these contrary conditions are so mingled together, that in few places are the miseries of life so severely felt, or its pleasures more luxuriously enjoyed.

To each of these states of life may the precepts of charity be enforced with eminent propriety, and unanswerable arguments. Those whose only complaint is a surfeit of felicity, and whose fearless and confident gaiety brings

[q] Bath.

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them hither, rather to waste health than to repair it, cannot surely be so intent upon the constant succession of amusements which vanity and affluence have provided, as not sometimes to turn their thoughts upon those whom poverty and ignorance have cut off from enjoyment, and consigned a prey to wickedness, to misery, and to want. If their amusements afford them the satisfaction which the eager repetition of them seems to declare they must certainly pity those who live in sight of so much happiness, which they can only view from a distance, but can never reach; and those whom they pity, they cannot surely hear the promises made to charity without endeavouring to relieve. But if, as the wisest among the votaries of pleasure have confessed, they feel themselves unsatisfied and deluded; if, as they own, their ardour is kept up by dissimulation, and they lay aside their appearance of felicity, when they retire from the eyes of those among whom they desire to propagate the deceit; if they feel that they have wasted life without possessing it; and know that they shall rise to-morrow to chase an empty good which they have often grasped at, but could never hold; they may surely spare something for the purchase of solid satisfaction, and cut off part of that expense by which nothing is procured, for the sake of giving to others those necessaries which the common wants of our being demand, and by the distribution of which they may lay up some treasures of happiness against that day which is stealing upon them, the day of age, of sickness, and of death, in which they shall be able to reflect with pleasure on no other part of their time past here, but that which was spent in the duties of charity. But, if these shall harden their dispositions, if these shall withhold their hands, let them not amuse themselves with the general excuses, or dream that any plea of inability will be accepted from those who squander wealth upon trifles, and trust sums that might relieve the wants of multitudes, to the skill of play, and the uncertainties of chance.

To those to whom languishment and sickness have

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shown the instability of all human happiness, I hope it will not be requisite to enforce the necessity of securing to themselves a state of unshaken security, and unchangeable enjoyment. To inculcate the shortness of life to those who feel hourly decays, or to expatiate on the miseries of disease and poverty to them whom pain perhaps, at this instant, is dragging to the grave, would be needless waste of that time which their condition admonishes them to spend, not in hearing, but in practising their duty. And of sickness, charity seems the peculiar employment, because it is an act of piety which can be practised with such slight and transient attention as pain and faintness may allow. To the sick, therefore, I may be allowed to pronounce the last summons to this mighty work, which, perhaps, the Divine providence will allow them to hear. Remember thou! that now faintest under the weight of long-continued maladies, that to thee, more emphatically, the night cometh in which no man can work; and, therefore, say not to him that asketh thee, "Go away now, and to-morrow I will give." To-morrow! To-morrow is to *all* uncertain, to *thee* almost hopeless; to-*day*, if thou wilt hear the voice of God calling thee to repentance, and by repentance to charity, harden not thy heart; but what thou knowest that in thy last moment thou shalt wish done, make haste to do, lest thy last moment be now upon thee.

And let us all, at all times, and in all places, remember, that they who have given food to the hungry, raiment to the naked, and instruction to the ignorant, shall be numbered by the Son of God amongst the blessed of the Father.

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SERMON V.

"Howbeit thou art just in all that is brought upon us, for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly." NEH. ix. 33.

THERE is nothing upon which more writers, in all ages, have laid out their abilities, than the miseries of life; and it affords no pleasing reflection to discover that a subject so little agreeable is not yet exhausted.

Some have endeavoured to engage us in the contemplation of the evils of life for a very wise and good end. They have proposed, by laying before us the uncertainty of prosperity, the vanity of pleasure, and the inquietudes of power, the difficult attainment of most earthly blessings, and the short duration of them all, to divert our thoughts from the glittering follies and tempting delusions that surround us, to an inquiry after more certain and permanent felicity not subject to be interrupted by sudden vicissitudes, or impaired by the malice of the revengeful, the caprice of the inconstant, or the envy of the ambitious. They have endeavoured to demonstrate, and have in reality demonstrated to all those who will steal a few moments from noise and show, and luxury, to attend to reason and to truth, that nothing is worthy of our ardent wishes, or intense solicitude, that terminates in this state of existence, and that those only make the true use of life that employ it in obtaining the favour of God, and securing everlasting happiness.

Others have taken occasion, from the dangers that surround, and the troubles that perplex us, to dispute the wisdom or justice of the Governour of the world, or to murmur at the laws of Divine providence; as the present state of the world, the disorder and confusion of every thing about us, the casual and certain evils to which they are exposed, and the disquiet and disgust which either accompany or follow those few pleasures that are within

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our reach, seem, in their opinion, to carry no marks of infinite benignity. This has been the reasoning by which the wicked and profligate, in all ages, have attempted to harden their hearts against the reproaches of conscience, and delude others into a participation of their crime. By this argument weak minds have been betrayed into doubts and distrust, and decoyed by degrees into a dangerous state of suspense, though, perhaps, never betrayed to absolute infidelity. For few men have been made infidels by argument and reflection; their actions are not generally the result of their reasonings, but their reasonings of their actions. Yet these reasonings, though they are not strong enough to pervert a good mind, may yet, when they coincide with interest, and are assisted by prejudice, contribute to confirm a man, already corrupted, in his impieties, and at least retard his reformation, if not entirely obstruct it.

Besides, notions thus derogatory from the providence of God tend, even in the best men, if not timely eradicated, to weaken those impressions of reverence and gratitude, which are necessary to add warmth to his devotions, and vigour to his virtue; for, as the force of corporeal motion is weakened by every obstruction, though it may not be entirely overcome by it, so the operations of the mind are by every false notion impeded and embarrassed, and though they are not wholly diverted or suppressed, proceed at least with less regularity, and with less celerity.

But these doubts may easily be removed, and these arguments confuted, by a calm and impartial attention to religion and to reason; it will appear upon examination, that though the world be full of misery and disorder, yet God is not to be charged with disregard to his creation; that if we suffer, we suffer by our own fault, and that "he has done right, but we have done wickedly."

We are informed by the Scriptures, that God is not the author of our present state; that when he created man, he created him for happiness; happiness indeed dependent upon his own choice, and to be preserved by his own

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conduct: for such must necessarily be the happiness of every reasonable being; that this happiness was forfeited by a breach of the conditions to which it was annexed; and that the posterity of him that broke the covenant were involved in the consequences of his fault. Thus religion shows us, that physical and moral evil entered the world together; and reason and experience assure us, that they continue for the most part so closely united, that, to avoid misery, we must avoid sin, and that, while it is in our power to be virtuous, it is in our power to be happy, at least, to be happy to such a degree, as may leave little room for murmur and complaints.

Complaints are doubtless irrational in themselves, and unjust with respect to God, if the remedies of the evils we lament are in our hands; for what more can be expected from the beneficence of our Creator, than that he should place good and evil before us, and then direct us in our choice?

That God has not been sparing of his bounties to mankind, or left them, even since the original transgression of his command, in a state so calamitous as discontent and melancholy have represented it, will evidently appear, if we reflect,

FIRST: How few of the evils of life can justly be ascribed to God.

SECONDLY: How far a general piety might exempt any community from those evils.

THIRDLY: How much, in the present corrupt state of the world, particular men may, by the practice of the duties of religion, promote their own happiness.

FIRST: How few of the evils of life can justly be ascribed to God.

In examining what part of our present misery is to be imputed to God, we must carefully distinguish that which is actually appointed by him, from that which is only permitted, or that which is the consequence of something done to ourselves, and could not be prevented, but by the interruption of those general and settled laws, which we

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term the course of nature, or the established order of the universe. Thus it is decreed by God, that all men should die; and, therefore, the death of each man may justly be ascribed to God, but the circumstances and time of his death are very much in his own power, or in the power of others. When a good man falls by the hand of an assassin, or is condemned by the testimony of false witnesses, or the sentence of a corrupt judge, his death may in some measure be called the work of God, but his murder is the action of men. That he was mortal, is the effect of the Divine decree; but that he was deprived of life unjustly, is the crime of his enemies.

If we examine all the afflictions of mind, body, and estate, by this rule, we shall find God not otherwise accessory to them, than as he works no miracles to prevent them, as he suffers men to be masters of themselves, and restrains them only by coercions applied to their reason. If God should, by a particular exertion of his omnipotence, hinder murder or oppression, no man could then be a murderer or an oppressor, because he would be withheld from it by an irresistible power; but then that power which prevented crimes would destroy virtue; for virtue is the consequence of choice. Men would be no longer rational, or would be rational to no purpose, because their actions would not be the result of free-will, determined by moral motives; but the settled and predestined motions of a machine impelled by necessity.

Thus it appears, that God would not act as the Governour of rational and moral agents, if he should lay any other restraints upon them than the hope of rewards or fear of punishments; and that to destroy or obviate the consequences of human actions, would be to destroy the present constitution of the world.

When, therefore, any man suffers pain from an injury offered him, that pain is not the act of God, but the effect of a crime, to which his enemy was determined by his own choice. He was created susceptible of pain, but not necessarily subjected to that particular injury which he

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now feels, and he is, therefore, not to charge God with his afflictions. The materials for building are naturally combustible; but when a city is fired by incendiaries, God is not the author of their destruction.

God may, indeed, by special acts of providence, sometimes hinder the designs of bad men from being successfully executed, or the execution of them from producing such consequences as it naturally tends to; but this, whenever it is done, is a real, though not always a visible miracle, and is not to be expected in the ordinary occurrences of life, or the common transactions of the world.

In making an estimate, therefore, of the miseries that arise from the disorders of the body, we must consider how many diseases proceed from our own laziness, intemperance, or negligence; how many the vices or follies of our ancestors have transmitted to us; and beware of imputing to God the consequences of luxury, riot, and debauchery.

There are, indeed, distempers which no caution can secure us from, and which appear to be more immediately the strokes of heaven; but these are not of the most painful or lingering kind; they are for the most part acute and violent, and quickly terminate, either in recovery or death; and it is always to be remembered, that nothing but wickedness makes death an evil.

Nor are the disquietudes of the mind less frequently excited by ourselves. Pride is the general source of our infelicity. A man that has a high opinion of his own merits, of the extent of his capacity, of the depth of his penetration, and the force of his eloquence, naturally forms schemes of employment and promotion, adequate to those abilities he conceives himself possessed of; he exacts from others the same esteem which he pays to himself, and imagines his deserts disregarded, if they are not rewarded to the extent of his wishes. He claims no more than he has a right to hope for, finds his exorbitant demands rejected, retires to obscurity and melancholy, and charges Heaven with his disappointments.

Men are very seldom disappointed, except when their

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desires are immoderate, or when they suffer their passions to overpower their reason, and dwell upon delightful scenes of future honours, power, or riches, till they mistake probabilities for certainties, or wild wishes for rational expectations. If such men, when they awake from these voluntary dreams, find the pleasing phantom vanish away, what can they blame but their own folly?

With no greater reason can we impute to providence the fears and anxieties that harass and distract us; for they arise from too close an adherence to those things from which we are commanded to disengage our affections. We fail of being happy, because we determine to obtain felicity by means different from those which God hath appointed. We are forbidden to be too solicitous about future events; and is the author of that prohibition to be accused, because men make themselves miserable by disregarding it?

Poverty, indeed, is not always the effect of wickedness, it may often be the consequence of virtue; but it is not certain that poverty is an evil. If we exempt the poor man from all the miseries to which his condition exposes him from the wickedness of others, if we secure him from the cruelty of oppression, and the contumelies of pride; if we suppose him to rate no enjoyment of this life, beyond its real and intrinsick value; and to indulge no desire more than reason and religion allow; the inferiority of his station will very little diminish his happiness; and, therefore, the poverty of the virtuous reflects no reproach upon providence. But poverty, like many other miseries of life, is often little more than an imaginary calamity. Men often call themselves poor, not because they want necessaries, but because they have not more than they want. This, indeed, is not always the case, nor ought we ever to harden our hearts against the cries of those who implore our assistance, by supposing that they feel less than they express; but let us all relieve the necessitous according to our abilities, and real poverty will soon be banished out of the world.

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To these general heads, may be reduced almost all the calamities that imbitter the life of man. To enumerate particular evils would be of little use. It is evident that most of our miseries are, either imaginary, or the consequences, either of our own faults, or the faults of others; and that it is, therefore, worthy of inquiry,

SECONDLY: How far a general piety might exempt any community from those evils.

It is an observation, very frequently made, that there is more tranquillity and satisfaction diffused through the inhabitants of uncultivated and savage countries, than is to be met with in nations filled with wealth and plenty, polished with civility, and governed by laws. It is found happy to be free from contention, though that exemption be obtained, by having nothing to contend for; and an equality of condition, though that condition be far from eligible, conduces more to the peace of society, than an established and legal subordination, in which every man is perpetually endeavouring to exalt himself to the rank above him, though by degrading others, already in possession of it, and every man exerting his efforts, to hinder his inferiours from rising to the level with himself. It appears, that it is better to have no property, than to be in perpetual apprehensions of fraudulent artifices, or open invasions; and that the security arising from a regular administration of government, is not equal to that which is produced by the absence of ambition, envy, or discontent.

Thus pleasing is the prospect of savage countries, merely from the ignorance of vice, even without the knowledge of virtue; thus happy are they, amidst all the hardships and distresses that attend a state of nature, because they are in a great measure free from those, which men bring upon one another.

But a community, in which virtue should generally prevail, of which every member should fear God with his whole heart, and love his neighbour as himself, where every man should labour to make himself "perfect, even

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as his Father which is in heaven is perfect," and endeavour, with his utmost diligence, to imitate the divine justice, and benevolence, would have no reason to envy those nations, whose quiet is the effect of their ignorance.

If we consider it with regard to publick happiness, it would be opulent without luxury, and powerful without faction: its counsels would be steady, because they would be just; and its efforts vigorous, because they would be united. The governours would have nothing to fear from the turbulence of the people, nor the people any thing to apprehend from the ambition of their governours. The encroachments of foreign enemies, they could not always avoid, but would certainly repulse; for scarce any civilized nation has been ever enslaved, till it was first corrupted.

With regard to private men, not only that happiness, which necessarily descends to particulars from the publick prosperity, would be enjoyed; but even those blessings, which constitute the felicity of domestick life, and are less closely connected with the general good. Every man would be industrious to improve his property, because he would be in no danger of seeing his improvements torn from him. Every man would assist his neighbour, because he would be certain of receiving assistance, if he should himself be attacked by necessity. Every man would endeavour after merit, because merit would always be rewarded. Every tie of friendship and relation would add to happiness, because it would not be subject to be broken by envy, rivalship, or suspicion. Children would honour their parents, because all parents would be virtuous; all parents would love their children, because all children would be obedient. The grief which we naturally feel at the death of those that are dear to us, could not perhaps be wholly prevented, but would be much more moderate, than in the present state of things, because no man could ever want a friend, and his loss would, therefore, be less, because his grief, like his other passions, would be regulated by his duty. Even the relations of subjection would produce no uneasiness, because insolence

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would be separated from power, and discontent from inferiority. Difference of opinions would never disturb this community, because every man would dispute for truth alone, look upon the ignorance of others with compassion, and reclaim them from their errours with tenderness and modesty. Persecution would not be heard of among them, because there would be no pride on one side, nor obstinacy on the other. Disputes about property would seldom happen, because no man would grow rich by injuring another; and when they did happen, they would be quickly terminated, because each party would be equally desirous of a just sentence. All care and solicitude would be almost banished from this happy region, because no man would either have false friends, or publick enemies. The immoderate desire of riches would be extinguished where there was no vanity to be gratified. The fear of poverty would be dispelled, where there was no man suffered to want what was necessary to his support, or proportioned to his deserts. Such would be the state of a community generally virtuous, and this happiness would probably be derived to future generations; since the earliest impressions would be in favour of virtue, since those, to whom the care of education should be committed, would make themselves venerable by the observation of their own precepts, and the minds of the young and unexperienced would not be tainted with false notions, nor their conduct influenced by bad examples.

Such is the state at which any community may arrive by the general practice of the duties of religion. And can Providence be accused of cruelty or negligence, when such happiness as this is within our power? Can man be said to have received his existence as a punishment, or a curse, when he may attain such a state as this; when even this is only preparatory to greater happiness, and the same course of life will secure him from misery, both in this world and in a future state?

Let no man charge this prospect of things, with being a train of airy phantoms; a visionary scene, with which a

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gay imagination may be amused in solitude and ease, but which the first survey of the world will show him to be nothing more than a pleasing delusion. Nothing has been mentioned which would not certainly be produced in any nation by a general piety. To effect all this, no miracle is required; men need only unite their endeavours, and exert those abilities which God has conferred upon them, in conformity to the laws of religion.

To general happiness, indeed, is required a general concurrence in virtue; but we are not to delay the amendment of our own lives, in expectation of this favourable juncture. An universal reformation must be begun somewhere, and every man ought to be ambitious of being the first. He that does not promote it, retards it; for every one must, by his conversation, do either good or hurt. Let every man, therefore, endeavour to make the world happy, by a strict performance of his duty to God and man, and the mighty work will soon be accomplished.

Governours have yet a harder task; they have not only their own actions, but those of others, to regulate, and are not only chargeable with their own faults, but with all those which they neglect to prevent or punish. As they are intrusted with the government for the sake of the people, they are under the strongest obligations to advance their happiness, which they can only do by the encouragement of virtue.

But since the care of governours may be frustrated, since publick happiness, which must be the result of publick virtue, seems to be at a great distance from us, let us consider,

THIRDLY: How much, in the present corrupt state of the world, particular men may, by the practice of the duties of religion, promote their own happiness.

He is very ignorant of the nature of happiness, who imagines it to consist wholly in the outward circumstances of life, which, being in themselves transient and variable, and generally dependent upon the will of others, can never be the true basis of a solid satisfaction. To be

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wealthy, to be honoured, to be loved, or to be feared, is not always to be happy. The man who considers himself as a being accountable to God, as a being sent into the world only to secure immortal happiness by his obedience to those laws which he has received from its Creator, will not be very solicitous about his present condition, which will soon give way to a state permanent and unchangeable, in which nothing will avail him but his innocence, or disturb him but his crimes. While this reflection is predominant in the mind, all the good and evil of life sinks into nothing. While he presses forward towards eternal felicity, honours and reproaches are equally contemptible. If he be injured, he will soon cease to feel the wrong; if he be calumniated, the day is coming in which all the nations of the earth, and all the host of heaven, shall be witnesses of his justification. If his friends forsake, or betray him, he alleviates his concern, by considering, that the Divine promises are never broken, and that the favour of God can only be forfeited by his own fault. In all his calamities he remembers, that it is in his own power to make them subservient to his own advantage, and that patience is one of those virtues which he is commanded to practise, and which God has determined to reward. That man can never be miserable to whom persecution is a blessing; nor can his tranquillity be interrupted, who places all his happiness in his prospect of eternity.

Thus it appears, that by the practice of our duty, even our present state may be made pleasing and desirable; and that if we languish under calamities, they are brought upon us, not by the immediate hand of Providence, but by our own folly and disobedience; that happiness will be diffused, as virtue prevails; and "that God has done right, but we have done wickedly."

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SERMON VI.

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom." Prov. xi. 2.

The writings of Solomon are filled with such observations upon the nature and life of man, as were the result of long experience assisted with every advantage of mind and fortune; an experience that had made him acquainted with the actions, passions, virtues, and vices of all ranks, ages, and denominations of mankind, and enabled him, with the Divine assistance, to leave to succeeding ages, a collection of precepts that, if diligently attended to, will conduct us safe in the paths of life.

Of the ancient sages of the heathen world, so often talked of, and so loudly applauded, there is recorded little more than single maxims, which they comprised in few words, and often inculcated; for these they were honoured by their contemporaries, and still continue reverenced and admired; nor would it either be justice or gratitude to depreciate their characters, since every discoverer or propagator of truth, is undoubtedly a benefactor to the world. But surely, if single sentences could procure them the epithet of *wise*, Solomon may, for this collection of important counsels, justly claim the title of the "wisest amongst the sons of men."

Amongst all the vices against which he has cautioned us, (and he has scarce left one untouched,) there is none upon which he animadverts with more severity, or to which he more frequently recalls our attention, by reiterated reflections, than the vice of *pride;* for which there may be many reasons assigned, but more particularly, two seem to deserve our consideration; the first drawn from the extensiveness of the sin; the other from the circumstance of the preacher.

The first is the extensiveness of the sin.

Pride is a corruption that seems almost originally in-

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grafted in our nature; it exerts itself in our first years, and, without continual endeavours to suppress it, influences our last. Other vices tyrannize over particular ages, and triumph in particular countries. Rage is the failing of youth, and avarice of age; revenge is the predominant passion of one country, and inconstancy the characteristick of another; but pride is the native of every country, infects every climate, and corrupts every nation. It ranges equally through the gardens of the east, and the deserts of the south, and reigns no less in the cavern of the savage, than in the palace of the epicure. It mingles with all our other vices, and without the most constant and anxious care, will mingle also with our virtues. It is no wonder, therefore, that Solomon so frequently directs us to avoid this fault, to which we are all so liable, since nothing is more agreeable to reason, than that precepts of the most general use should be most frequently inculcated.

The second reason may be drawn from the circumstances of the preacher.

Pride was probably a crime to which Solomon himself was most violently tempted; and indeed it might have been much more easily imagined, that he would have fallen into this sin, than into some others of which he was guilty; since he was placed in every circumstance that could expose him to it. He was a king absolute and independent, and by consequence surrounded with sycophants ready to second the first motions of self-love, and blow the sparks of vanity; to echo all the applauses, and suppress all the murmurs of the people; to comply with every proposal, and flatter every failing. These are the tempters to which kings have been always exposed, and whose snares few kings have been able to overcome.

But Solomon had not only the pride of royalty to suppress, but the pride of prosperity, of knowledge, and of wealth; each of them able to subdue the virtue of most men, to intoxicate their minds, and hold their reason in captivity. Well might Solomon more diligently warn us against a sin which had assaulted him in so many dif-

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ferent forms. Could any superiority to the rest of the world make pride excusable, it might have been pardoned in Solomon; but he has been so far from allowing it either in himself or others, that he has left a perpetual attestation in favour of humility, that "where pride cometh, there cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom."

This assertion I shall endeavour to explain and confirm,

FIRST: By considering the nature of pride in general, with its attendants and consequences.

SECONDLY: By examining some of the usual motives to pride; and showing how little can be pleaded in excuse of it.

THIRDLY: By showing the amiableness and excellence of humility.

FIRST: By considering in general the nature of pride, with its attendants and consequences.

Pride, simply considered, is an immoderate degree of self-esteem, or an over-value set upon a man by himself, and, like most other vices, is founded originally on an intellectual falsehood. But this definition sets this vice in the fairest light, and separates it from all its consequences, by considering man without relation to society, and independent of all outward circumstances. Pride, thus defined, is only the seed of that complicated sin against which we are cautioned in the text. It is the pride of a solitary being, and the subject of scholastick disquisitions, not of a practical discourse.

In speculation, pride may be considered as ending where it began, and exerting no influences beyond the bosom in which it dwells; but in real life, and the course of affairs, pride will always be attended with kindred passions, and produce effects equally injurious to others, and destructive to itself.

He that overvalues himself will undervalue others, and he that undervalues others will oppress them. To this fancied superiority it is owing, that tyrants have squandered the lives of millions, and looked unconcerned on the

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miseries of war. It is, indeed, scarcely credible, it would, without experience, be absolutely incredible, that a man should carry destruction and slaughter round the world, lay cities in ashes, and put nations to the sword, without one pang or one tear; that we should feel no reluctance at seizing the possessions of another, at robbing parents of their children, and shortening or imbittering innumerable lives. Yet this fatal, this dreadful effect, has pride been able to produce. Pride has been able to harden the heart against compassion, and stop the ears against the cries of misery.

In this manner does pride operate, when unhappily united with power and dominion; and has, in the lower ranks of mankind, similar, though not equal, effects. It makes masters cruel and imperious, and magistrates insolent and partial. It produces contempt and injuries, and dissolves the bond of society.

Nor is this species of pride more hurtful to the world, than destructive to itself. The oppressour unites heaven and earth against him; if a private man, he, at length, becomes the object of universal hatred and reproach; and if a prince, the neighbouring monarchs combine to his ruin. So that "when pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom."

He that sets too high a value upon his own merits, will, of course, think them ill rewarded with his present condition. He will endeavour to exalt his fortune and his rank above others, in proportion as his deserts are superiour to theirs. He will conceive his virtues obscured by his fortune, lament that his great abilities lie useless and unobserved for want of a sphere of action, in which he might exert them in their full extent. Once fired with these notions, he will attempt to increase his fortune, and enlarge his sphere; and how few there are that prosecute such attempts with innocence, a very transient observation will sufficiently inform us.

Every man has remarked the indirect methods made use of in the pursuit of wealth; a pursuit, for the most part,

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prompted by pride; for to what end is an ample fortune generally coveted? Not that the possessour may have it in his power to relieve distress, or recompense virtue; but that he may distinguish himself from the herd of mankind by expensive vices, foreign luxuries, and a pompous equipage. To pride, therefore, must be ascribed most of the fraud, injustice, violence, and extortion, by which wealth is frequently acquired.

Another concomitant of pride is envy, or the desire of debasing others. A proud man is uneasy and dissatisfied, while any of those applauses are bestowed on another, which he is desirous of himself. On this account he never fails of exerting all his art to destroy, or obstruct, a rising character. His inferiours he endeavours to depress, lest they should become his equals; and his equals, not only because they are so, but lest they should in time become his superiours. For this end he circulates the whisper of malevolence, aggravates the tale of calumny, and assists the clamour of defamation; opposes in publick the justest designs, and in private depreciates the most uncontested virtues.

Another consequence of immoderate self-esteem is an insatiable desire of propagating in others the favourable opinion he entertains of himself. No proud man is satisfied with being singly his own admirer; his excellencies must receive the honour of publick suffrage. He, therefore, tortures his invention for means to make himself conspicuous, and to draw the eyes of the world upon him. It is impossible, and would be here improper, to enumerate all the fictitious qualities, all the petty emulations, and laborious trifles, to which this appetite, this eagerness of distinction, has given birth in men of narrow views and mean attainments. But who can without horrour think on those wretches who can attempt to raise a character by superiority of guilt? Who endeavour to excel in vice and outvie each other in debauchery? Yet thus far can pride infatuate the mind, and extinguish the light of reason.

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But for the most part it is ordered by Providence, that the schemes of the ambitious are disappointed, the calumnies of the envious detected, and false pretences to reputation ridiculed and exposed, so that still "when pride cometh, then cometh shame, but with the lowly is wisdom."

I am now to consider, in the second place, some of the usual motives to pride, and show how little they can be pleaded in excuse of it.

A superiour being that should look down upon the disorder, confusion, and corruption of our world, that should observe the shortness of our lives, the weakness of our bodies, the continual accidents, or injuries, to which we are subject; the violence of our passions, the irregularity of our conduct, and the transitory state of every thing about us, would hardly believe there could be among us such a vice as pride, or that any human being should need to be cautioned against being too much elated with his present state. Yet so it is, that, however weak or wicked we may be, we fix our eyes on some other that is represented by our self-love to be weaker, or more wicked, than ourselves, and grow proud upon the comparison. Thus, in the midst of danger and uncertainty, we see many intoxicated with the pride of prosperity; a prosperity that is hourly exposed to be disturbed, a prosperity that lies often at the mercy of a treacherous friend, or unfaithful servant, a prosperity which certainly cannot last long, but must soon be ended by the hand of death.

To consider this motive to pride more attentively, let us examine what it is to be prosperous. To be prosperous, in the common acceptation, is to have a large, or an increasing, fortune, great numbers of friends and dependents, and to be high in the esteem of the world in general. But do these things constitute the happiness of a man? of a being accountable to his Creator for his conduct, and, according to the account he shall give, designed to exist eternally in a future state of happiness, or misery? What is the prosperity of such a state, but the

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approbation of that God, on whose sentence futurity depends? But neither wealth, friendships, or honours, are proofs of that approbation, or means necessary to procure it. They often endanger, but seldom promote, the future happiness of those that possess them. And can pride be inspired by such prosperity as this?

Even with regard to the present life, pride is a very dangerous associate to greatness. A proud man is opposed in his rise, hated in his elevation, and insulted in his fall. He may have dependents, but can have no friends; and parasites, but no ingenuous companions.

Another common motive to pride is knowledge, a motive equally weak, vain, and idle, with the former. Learning, indeed, imperfect as it is, may contribute to many great and noble ends, and may be called in to the assistance of religion; as it is too often perversely employed against it; it is of use to display the greatness, and vindicate the justice, of the Almighty; to explain the difficulties, and enforce the proofs, of religion. And the small advances that may be made in science, are of themselves some proof of a future state, since they show that God, who can be supposed to make nothing in vain, has given us faculties evidently superiour to the business of this present world. And this is, perhaps, one reason, why our intellectual powers are, in this life, of so great extent as they are. But how little reason have we to boast of our knowledge, when we only gaze and wonder at the surfaces of things? when the wisest and most arrogant philosopher knows not how a grain of corn is generated, or why a stone falls to the ground? But, were our knowledge far greater than it is, let us yet remember that goodness, not knowledge, is the happiness of man! The day will come, it will come quickly, when it shall profit us more to have subdued one proud thought, than to have numbered the host of heaven.

There is another more dangerous species of pride, arising from a consciousness of virtue; so watchful is the enemy of our souls, and so deceitful are our own hearts,

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that too often a victory over one sinful inclination exposes us to be conquered by another. Spiritual pride represents a man to himself beloved by his Creator in a particular degree, and, of consequence, inclines him to think others not so high in his favour as himself. This is an errour, into which weak minds are sometimes apt to fall, not so much from the assurance that they have been steady in the practice of justice, righteousness, and mercy, as that they have been punctually observant of some external acts of devotion. This kind of pride is generally accompanied with great uncharitableness, and severe censures of others, and may obstruct the great duty of repentance. But it may be hoped that a sufficient remedy against this sin may be easily found, by reminding those who are infected with it, that the blood of Christ was poured out upon the cross to make their best endeavours acceptable to God; and that they, whose sins require such an expiation, have little reason to boast of their virtue.

Having thus proved the unreasonableness, folly, and odious nature of pride, I am, in the last place, to show the amiableness and excellence of humility.

Upon this head I need not be long, since every argument against any vice is equally an argument in favour of the contrary virtue; and whoever proves the folly of being proud, shows, at the same time, "that with the lowly there is wisdom." But to evince beyond opposition the excellence of this virtue, we may in few words observe, that the life of our Lord was one continued exercise of humility. The Son of God condescended to take our nature upon him, to become subject to pain, to bear, from his birth, the inconveniencies of poverty, and to wander from city to city, amidst opposition, reproach, and calumny. He disdained not to converse with publicans and sinners, to minister to his own disciples, and to weep at the miseries of his own creatures. He submitted to insults and revilings, and, being led like a lamb to the slaughter, opened not his mouth. At length, having borne all the cruel treatment that malice could suggest, or power inflict,

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he suffered the most lingering and ignominious death.—God of his infinite mercy grant, that by imitating his humility, we may be made partakers of his merits! To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour, adoration, and praise, now and ever! Amen.

SERMON VII.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein." JER. vi. 16.

THAT almost every age, from the beginning of the world, has been eminently marked out, and distinguished from the rest, by some peculiar character, by particular modes of thinking, or methods of acting, then almost universally prevalent, is evident from the histories of all nations. At one time the whole world has bowed, without repining, to despotick power, and absolute dominion; at another, not only the licentious and oppressive tyranny of governours has been restrained, but just and lawful authority trampled upon, and insulted; at one time, all regard for private interest has been absorbed and lost, in the concern for the welfare of the publick, to which virtue itself has been made a sacrifice; at another, every heart has been engrossed by low views, and every sentiment of the mind has been contracted into the narrow compass of self-love. Thus have vice and virtue, wisdom and folly, or, perhaps, only different follies and opposite vices, alternately prevailed: thus have mankind rushed from one errour to another, and suffered equally by both extremes.

These changes of conduct or opinion may be considered as the revolutions of human nature, often necessary, but always dangerous. Necessary, when some favourite vice

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has generally infected the world, or some errour, long established, begins to tyrannize, to demand implicit faith, and refuse examination. But dangerous, lest the mind, incensed by oppression, heated by contest, and elated by victory, should be too far transported to attend to truth, and, out of zeal to secure her conquest, set up one errour to depress another.

That no change in religion has been made with that calmness, caution, and moderation, which religion itself requires, and which common prudence shows to be necessary in the transaction of any important affair, every nation of the earth can sufficiently attest. Rage has been called in to the assistance of zeal, and destruction joined with reformation. Resolved not to stop short, men have generally gone too far, and, in lopping superfluities, have wounded essentials.

This conduct, when we consider the weakness of human nature, and the circumstances of most of those by whom such changes have been effected, is entitled at least to compassion, if not to excuse; nor can it be doubted, that our great Creator looks down with tenderness and compassion upon the irregular starts and tempestuous agitations of a mind, moved by a zeal for his honour, and a love of truth. Had all errour and misconduct such a plea as this, they might, indeed, be lamented, and prayed against as weaknesses, but could hardly be censured, or condemned, as crimes.

But more slow and silent transitions from one extreme to another are very frequent. Men, not impelled by the vehemence of opposition, but seduced by inclinations less violent, too often deviate from the paths of truth, and persuade others to follow them. The pride of singularity influences the teacher, and a love of novelty corrupts the follower, till the delusion, extending itself by degrees, becomes at length general, and overspreads a people.

The prevailing spirit of the present age seems to be the spirit of skepticism and captiousness, of suspicion and distrust, a contempt of all authority, and a presumptuous

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confidence in private judgment; a dislike of all established forms, merely because they are established, and of old paths, because they are old.

Into this temper have men been insensibly led by a warm assertion of the right of judging for themselves, a right not to be called in question, since God himself gave us a claim to it, in making us reasonable beings; and the apostle doubtless admits it, when he directs us to give the reason of our faith to any that shall demand it.

But this privilege, ill understood, has been, and always may be, the occasion of very dangerous and pernicious mistakes; it may be exercised without knowledge or discretion, till errour be entangled with errour, till divisions be multiplied by endless subdivisions, till the bond of peace be entirely broken, and the church become a scene of confusion, a chaos of discordant forms of worship, and inconsistent systems of faith.

There are some men, we now find, to whom separation and disagreement appear not such formidable evils as they are generally represented; who can look with the utmost calmness and unconcern at a rising schism, and survey, without any perturbation, the speedy progress of an increasing heresy. Let every man, say they, enjoy his opinions, since *he* only is answerable for them.

There are men, who, for the most part, value themselves, and are sometimes valued by others, for their enlarged views and generous sentiments; who pretend to look with uncommon penetration into the causes of human actions, and the secret motions of the mind; but, perhaps, this opinion is no proof that their pretensions are well grounded, or that they are better acquainted with human nature than those whom they affect to ridicule and insult.

If it be granted that it is the duty of every man to publish, profess, and defend any important truth, and the truths of religion be allowed important, it will follow, that diversity of sentiments must naturally produce controversies and altercations. And how few there are capable of managing debates without unbecoming heat, or dishonest

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artifices; how soon zeal is kindled into fury, and how soon a concern for reputation mingles with a concern for truth; how readily the antagonists deviate into personal invectives, and instead of confuting the arguments, defame the lives of those whose doctrine they disapprove; and how often disputes terminate in uproar, riot, and persecution, every one is convinced, and too many have experienced. That diversity of opinions, which is the original source of such evils as these, cannot, therefore, be too diligently obviated; nor can too many endeavours be used to check the growth of new doctrines, and reclaim those that propagate them, before sects are formed, or schisms established.

This is not to be done by denying, or disputing, the right of private judgment, but by exhorting all men to exercise it in a proper manner, according to each man's measure of knowledge, abilities, and opportunities; and by endeavouring to remove all those difficulties which may obstruct the discovery of truth, and exposing the unreasonableness of such prejudices as may perplex or mislead the inquirer.

The prejudice, to which many of the disorders of the present age, in which infidelity, superstition, and enthusiasm, seem contending for empire over us, may be justly ascribed, is an overfondness of novelty, a desire of striking out new paths to peace and happiness, and a neglect of following the precept in the text of asking for the old paths, where is the good way, and walking therein. A precept I shall, therefore, endeavour to illustrate,

FIRST: By laying before you the dangers of judging of religion, without long and diligent examination.

SECONDLY: By evincing the reasonableness of searching into antiquity, or of asking for the old paths. And

THIRDLY: By shewing the happiness which attends a well-grounded belief, and steady practice of religion.

FIRST: I propose to lay before you the dangers of judging of religion, without a long and diligent examination.

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There is no topick more the favourite of the present age, than the innocence of errour accompanied with sincerity. This doctrine has been cultivated with the utmost diligence, enforced with all the arts of argument, and embellished with all the ornaments of eloquence, but perhaps not bounded with equal care, by proper limitations, nor preserved by just explication, from being a snare to pride, and a stumbling block to weakness.

That the Judge of all the earth will do right, that he will require in proportion to what he has given, and punish men for the misapplication or neglect of talents, not for the want of them; that he condemns no man for not seeing what he has hid from him, or for not attending to what he could never hear; seems to be the necessary, the inevitable consequence of his own attributes.

That errour, therefore, may be innocent will not be denied, because it undoubtedly may be sincere; but this concession will give very little countenance to the security and supineness, the coldness and indifference of the present generation, if we consider deliberately, how much is required to constitute that sincerity, which shall avert the wrath of God, and reconcile him to errour.

Sincerity is not barely a full persuasion of the truth of our assertions, a persuasion too often grounded upon a high opinion of our own sagacity, and confirmed, perhaps, by frequent triumphs over weak opponents, continually gaining new strength by a neglect of reexamination, which, perhaps, we decline, by industriously diverting our attention from any objections that arise in our thoughts, and suppressing any suspicion of a fallacy, before the mind has time to connect its ideas, to form arguments, and draw conclusions. Sincerity is not a heat of the heart, kept up by eager contentions or warm professions, nor a tranquillity produced by confidence, and continued by indolence. There may be zeal without sincerity, and security without innocence. If we forbear to inquire through laziness or pride, or inquire with partiality, passion, precipitancy; if we do not watch over the most hidden motions

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of our hearts, and endeavour, with our utmost efforts, to banish all those secret tendencies, and all those lurking inclinations, which operate very frequently without being attended to even by ourselves; if we do not carry on our search without regard to the reputation of our teachers, our followers, or ourselves, and labour after truth with equal industry and caution; let us not presume to put any trust in our sincerity.

Such is the present weakness and corruption of human nature, that sincerity, real sincerity, is rarely to be found; but, till it be found, it is the last degree of folly to represent errour as innocent. By a God infinitely merciful, and propitiated by the death of our blessed Saviour, it may, indeed, be pardoned, but it cannot be justified.

But the greatest part of those that declaim with most vehemence in defence of their darling notions, seem to have very little claim even to pardon on account of their sincerity. It is difficult to conceive what time is allotted to religious questions and controversies by a man whose life is engrossed by the hurries of business, and whose thoughts are continually upon the stretch, to form plans for the improvement of his fortune, or the gratification of his ambition. Nor is it very probable, that such subjects are more seriously considered by men abandoned to pleasure, men who sit down to eat, and rise up to play, whose life is a circle of successive amusements, and whose hours are distinguished only by vicissitudes of pleasure. And yet the questions which these frequently decide, and decide without the least suspicion of their own qualifications, are often of a very intricate and complicated kind, which must be disentangled by a long and continued attention, and resolved with many restrictions and great caution. Not only knowledge, judgment, and experience, but uninterrupted leisure and retirement are necessary, that the chain of reasoning may be preserved unbroken, and the mind perform its operations, without any hindrance from foreign objects.

To this end men have formerly retreated to solitudes

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and cloisters, and excluded all the cares and pleasures of the world, and when they have spent a great part of their lives in study and meditation, at last, perhaps, deliver their opinions, as learned men will generally do, with diffidence and fear.

Happy would it be for the present age if men were now thus distrustful of their own abilities. They would not then adopt opinions, merely because they wish them to be true, then defend what they have once adopted, warm themselves into confidence, and then rest satisfied with the pleasing consciousness of their own sincerity. We should not then see men, not eminent for any superiour gifts of nature, or extraordinary attainments, endeavouring to form new sects, and to draw the world after them. They may, indeed, act with an honest intention, and so far with sincerity, but certainly without that caution which their inexperience ought to suggest, and that reverence for their superiours, which reason, as well as the laws of society, requires. They seem, even when considered with the utmost candour, to have rather consulted their own imaginations, than to have asked for the old paths, where is the good way. It is, therefore, proper in this place that I should endeavour,

SECONDLY: To evince the reasonableness of searching into antiquity, or of asking for the "old paths."

A contempt of the monuments and the wisdom of antiquity, may justly be reckoned one of the reigning follies of these days, to which pride and idleness have equally contributed. The study of antiquity is laborious; and to despise what we cannot, or will not understand, is a much more expeditious way to reputation. Part of the disesteem into which their writings are now fallen, may indeed be ascribed to that exorbitant degree of veneration, in which they were once held by blindness and superstition. But there is a mean betwixt idolatry and insult, between weak credulity and total disbelief. The ancients are not infallible, nor are their decisions to be received without examination; but they are at least the determinations of

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men equally desirous with ourselves of discovering truth, and who had, in some cases, better opportunities than we now have.

With regard to the order and government of the primitive church, we may doubtless follow their authority with perfect security; they could not possibly be ignorant of laws executed, and customs practised, by themselves; nor would they, even supposing them corrupt, serve any interests of their own, by handing down false accounts to posterity. We are, therefore, to inquire from them, the different orders established in the ministry from the apostolick ages; the different employments of each, and their several ranks, subordinations, and degrees of authority. From their writings we are to vindicate the establishment of our church, and by the same writings are those who differ from us, in these particulars, to defend their conduct.

Nor is this the only, though perhaps the chief use of these writers: for, in matters of faith, and points of doctrine, those, at least, who lived in the ages nearest to the times of the apostles, undoubtedly deserve to be consulted. The oral doctrines, and occasional explications of the apostles, would not be immediately forgotten, in the churches to which they had preached, and which had attended to them, with the diligence and reverence which their mission and character demanded. Their solutions of difficulties, and determinations of doubtful questions, must have been treasured up in the memory of their audiences, and transmitted for some time from father to son. Every thing, at least, that was declared by the inspired teachers to be necessary to salvation, must have been carefully recorded; and, therefore, what we find no traces of in the Scripture, or the early fathers, as most of the peculiar tenets of the Romish church, must certainly be concluded to be not necessary. Thus, by consulting first the Holy Scriptures, and next the writers of the primitive church, we shall make ourselves acquainted with the will of God; thus shall we discover the good way, and find

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that rest for our souls, which will amply recompense our studies and inquiries, as I shall attempt to prove,

THIRDLY: By showing the happiness which attends a well-grounded belief, and steady practice of religion.

The serenity and satisfaction at which we arrive by a firm and settled persuasion of the fundamental articles of our religion, is very justly represented by the expression of finding rest for the soul. A mind restless and undetermined, continually fluctuating betwixt various opinions, always in pursuit of some better scheme of duties, and more eligible system of faith, eager to embrace every new doctrine, and adopt the notions of every pretender to extraordinary light, can never be sufficiently calm and unruffled, to attend to those duties which procure that peace of God which passeth all understanding.

Suspense and uncertainty distract the soul, disturb its motions, and retard its operations: while we doubt in what manner to worship God, there is great danger lest we should neglect to worship him at all. A man, conscious of having long neglected to worship God, can scarcely place any confidence in his mercy, or hope, in the most pressing exigencies, for his protection. And how miserable is that man, who, on the bed of sickness, or in the hour of death, is without trust in the goodness of his Creator! This state, dreadful as it appears, may be justly apprehended by those who spend their lives in roving from one new way to another, and are so far from asking for "the old paths," where is the "good way," that when they are shown it, they say, "We will not walk therein."

There is a much closer connexion between practice and speculation than is generally imagined. A man disquieted with scruples concerning any important article of religion, will, for the most part, find himself indifferent and cold, even to those duties which he practised before with the most active diligence and ardent satisfaction. Let him then ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and he shall find rest for his soul. His mind, once set at ease from perplexity, and perpetual agitation, will return

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with more vigour to the exercises of piety. An uniform perseverance in these holy practices, will produce a steady confidence in the Divine favour, and that confidence will complete his happiness. To which that we may all attain, God of his infinite mercy grant, for the merits of Jesus Christ, our Saviour; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all honour, adoration, and praise, now and ever! Amen.

SERMON VIII.

"Be not wise in your own conceits." ROM. xii. 16, last part.

IT has been observed by those who have employed themselves in considering the methods of Providence, and the government of the world, that good and evil are distributed, through all states of life, if not in equal proportions, yet in such degrees as leave very little room for those murmurs and complaints, which are frequently produced by superficial inquiries, negligent surveys, and impatient comparisons.

Every condition has, with regard to this life, its inconveniencies, and every condition has likewise its advantages; though its position to the eye of the beholder may be so varied, as that at some times the misery may be concealed, and at other times the happiness; but to judge only by the eye is not the way to discover truth. We may pass by men, without being able to distinguish whether they are to be numbered among those whose felicities, or whose sorrows, preponderate; as we may walk over the ground, without knowing whether its entrails contain mines of gold, or beds of sand.

Nor is it less certain, that, with respect to the more important prospects of a future state, the same impartiality of distribution may be generally remarked; every

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condition of humanity being exposed on one side, and guarded on the other; so that every man is burdened, though none are overwhelmed; every man is obliged to vigilance, but none are harassed beyond their strength. The great business, therefore, of every man is to look diligently round him, that he may note the approaches of an enemy; and to bar the avenues of temptation, which the particular circumstances of his life are most likely to lay open; and to keep his heart in perpetual alarm against those sins which constantly besiege him. If he be rich, let him beware, lest when he is "full, he deny God," and say, "Who is the Lord?" If he be poor, let him cautiously avoid to "steal," and "take the name" of his "God in vain."

There are some conditions of humanity, which are made particularly dangerous by an uncommon degree of seeming security; conditions, in which we appear so completely fortified, that we have little to dread, and, therefore, give ourselves up too readily to negligence and supineness; and are destroyed without precaution, because we flattered ourselves, that destruction could not approach us. This fatal slumber of treacherous tranquillity may be produced and prolonged by many causes, by causes as various as the situations of life. Our condition may be such, as may place us out of the reach of those general admonitions, by which the rest of mankind are reminded of their errours, and awakened to their duty; it may remove us to a great distance from the common incitements to common wickedness, and, therefore, may superinduce a forgetfulness of our natural frailties, and suppress all suspicions of the encroachments of sin. And the sin to which we are particularly tempted, may be of that insidious and seductive kind, as that, without alarming us by the horrours of its appearance, and shocking us with the enormity of any single acts, may, by slow advances, possess the soul, and in destroying us differ only from the atrociousness of more apparent wickedness, as a lingering poison differs from the sword; more difficultly avoided, and more certainly fatal.

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To temptations of this subtle insinuating kind, the life of men of learning seems above all others to be exposed. As they are themselves appointed the teachers of others, they very rarely have the dangers of their own state set before them; as they are, by their abstraction and retirement, secluded from the gaieties, the luxuries, and the pageantries of life, they are willingly persuaded to believe, that because they are at a great distance from the rocks on which conscience is most frequently wrecked, that, therefore, they sail with safety, and may give themselves to the wind, without a compass. The crimes, from which they are in danger, are not those from which the mind has been taught to shrink away with horrour, or against which the invectives of moral or theological writers have generally been directed; and, therefore, they are suffered to approach unregarded, to gain ground imperceptibly upon minds directed to different views, and to fix themselves at leisure in the heart, where perhaps they are scarcely discovered till they are past eradication.

To these causes, or to some of these, it must surely be imputed, that learning is found so frequently to fail in the direction of life; and to operate so faintly and uncertainly in the regulation of their conduct, who are most celebrated for their application and proficiency. They have been betrayed by some false security, to withhold their attention from their own lives; they have grown knowing without growing virtuous; and have failed of the wisdom which is the gift of the Father of lights, because they have thought it unnecessary to seek it with that anxiety and importunity, to which only it is granted; they have trusted to their own powers, and were "wise in their own conceits."

There is perhaps no class of men, to whom the precept given by the apostle to his converts, against too great confidence in their understandings, may be more properly inculcated, than those who are dedicated to the profession of literature; and are, therefore, necessarily advanced to degrees of knowledge above them who are dispersed among manual occupations, and the vulgar parts of life;

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whose attention is confined within the narrow limits of their own employments, and who have not often leisure to think of more than the means of relieving their own wants, by supplying the demands of others.

With these, and such as these, placed sometimes, by whatever means, in much higher stations, a man of learning has such frequent opportunities of comparing himself; and is so strongly incited, by that comparison, to indulge the contemplation of his own superiority, that it is not to be considered as wonderful, that vanity creeps in upon him; that he does not willingly withdraw his imagination from objects that so much flatter his passions; that he pursues the train of thought from one reflection to another, places himself and others in every situation in which he can appear with advantage in his own eyes, rises to comparisons with still higher characters, and still retains the habit of giving himself the preference; and in all disputable cases, turns the balance in his own favour, by superadding, from his own conceit, that wisdom which by nature he does not possess, or by industry he has not acquired.

This wisdom in his own conceit is very easily at first mistaken for qualities, not in themselves criminal, nor in themselves dangerous; nor is it easy to fix the limits, in speculation, between a resolute adherence to that which appears truth, and an obstinate obtrusion of peculiar notions upon the understanding of others; between the pleasure that naturally arises from the enlargement of the mind, and increase of knowledge, and that which proceeds from a contempt of others, and the insolent triumphs of intellectual superiority. Yet, though the confines of these qualities are nearly alike, their extremes are widely different; and it will soon be discovered, how much evil is avoided by repressing that opinion of ourselves, which vanity suggests; and that confidence, which is gained only by measuring ourselves by ourselves, dwelling on our own excellence, and flattering ourselves with secret panegyricks.

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As this false claim to wisdom is the source of many faults, as well as miseries, to men of learning, it seems of the utmost importance, to obviate it in the young, who may be imagined to be very little tainted, and suppress it in others, whose greater advances, and more extensive reputation, have more endangered them; nor can any man think himself so innocent of this fault, or so secure from it, as that it should be unnecessary for him to consider,

FIRST: The dangers which men of learning incur, by being wise in their own conceits.

SECONDLY: The proper means by which that pernicious conceit of wisdom may be avoided or suppressed.

In order to state with more accuracy the dangers which men dedicated to learning may be reasonably imagined to incur, by being wise in their own conceits; it is necessary to distinguish the different periods of their lives; and to examine, whether this disposition is not in its tendency equally opposite to our duty, and, by inevitable consequence, in its effects, equally destructive of our happiness, in every state.

The business of the life of a scholar is to accumulate, and to diffuse knowledge; to learn, in order that he may teach. The first part of his time is assigned to study, and the acquisition of learning; the latter, to the practice of those arts which he has acquired, and to the instruction of others, who have had less time, or opportunities, or abilities for improvement. In the state, therefore, of a learner, or of a teacher, the man of letters is always to be considered; and if it shall appear, that, on whatever part of his task he is employed, a false opinion of his own excellence will naturally and certainly defeat his endeavours; it may be hoped, that there will be found sufficient reason, why no man should "be wise in his own conceit."

Since no man can teach what he has never learned, the value and usefulness of the latter part of life must depend in a great measure upon the proper application of the earlier years; and he that neglects the improve-

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ment of his own mind, will never be enabled to instruct others. Light must strike on the body, by which light can be reflected. The disposition, therefore, which best befits a young man, about to engage in a life of study, is patience in inquiry; eagerness of knowledge; and willingness to be instructed; a due submission to greater abilities and longer experience; and a ready obedience to those from whom he is to expect the removal of his ignorance, and the resolution of his doubts.

How unlike any one, wise in his own conceit, is to excite, or promote in himself, such inclinations, may be easily determined. It is well known that study is not diligently prosecuted, but at the expense of many pleasures and amusements; which no young man will be persuaded to forbear, but upon the most cogent motives, and the strongest conviction. He that is to draw truth from the depths of obscurity, must be fully informed of its value, and the necessity of finding it; he that engages in a state opposite to the pleasures of sense, and the gratification of every higher passion, must have some principle within, strongly implanted, which may enforce industry, and repel temptation. But how shall he, who is already "wise in his own conceit," submit to such tedious and laborious methods of instruction? Why should he toil for that, which, in his own opinion, he possesses; and drudge for the supply of wants, which he does not feel? He has already such degrees of knowledge, as, magnified by his own imagination, exalt him above the rest of mankind; and to climb higher, would be to labour without advantage.

He already has a wide extent of science within his view, and his willingness to be pleased with himself does not suffer him to think, or to dwell on the thought of any thing beyond; and who that sees all would wish to see further? That submission to authority, and that reverence for instruction, which so well becomes every man at his first entrance upon new regions of learning, where all is novelty, confusion, and darkness, and no way is to be

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found through the intricacies of opposite systems, but by tracing the steps of those that have gone before; that willingness to receive implicitly what further advances only can enable him to prove, which initiation always supposes, are very little to be expected from him, who looks down with scorn upon his teacher, and is more ready to censure the obscurity of precepts, than to suspect the force of his own understanding. Knowledge is to be attained by slow and gradual acquisitions, by a careful review of our ideas, and a regular superstructure of one proposition on another; and is, therefore, the reward only of diligence and patience. But patience is the effect of modesty; pride grasps at the whole; and what it cannot hold, it affects to despise; it is rather solicitous to display, than increase its acquisitions; and rather endeavours by fame to supply the want of knowledge, than by knowledge to arrive at fame.

That these are not imaginary representations, but true copies of real life, most of those to whom the instruction of young men is intrusted will be ready to confess; since they have often the dissatisfaction of finding, that, in proportion as greater advances have been made in the first period of life, there is less diligence in the second. And that, as it was said of the ancient Gauls, that they were more than men in the onset, and less than women in the shock; it may be said in our literary contentions, that many, who were men at school, are boys at the college.

Their ardour remits, their diligence relaxes, and they give themselves to a lazy contemplation of comparative excellence, without considering that the comparison is hourly growing less advantageous, and that the acquisitions which they boast are mouldering away.

Such is the danger to a learner, of too early an opinion of his own importance: but if we suppose him to have escaped in his first years this fatal confidence, and to be betrayed into it by a longer series of successful application, its effects will then be equally dangerous; and as it hin-

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ders a young man from receiving instruction, it will obstruct an older student in conveying it.

There is no employment in which men are more easily betrayed to indecency and impatience, than in that of teaching; in which they necessarily converse with those who are their inferiours in the relation by which they are connected, and whom it may be sometimes proper to treat with that dignity which too often swells into arrogance; and to restrain with such authority as not every man has learned to separate from tyranny. In this state of temporary honour, a proud man is too willing to exert his prerogative; and too ready to forget that he is dictating to those, who may one day dictate to him. He is inclined to wonder that what he comprehends himself is not equally clear to others; and often reproaches the intellects of his auditors, when he ought to blame the confusion of his own ideas, and the improprieties of his own language. He reiterates, therefore, his positions without elucidation, and enforces his assertions by his frown, when he finds arguments less easy to be supplied. Thus forgetting that he had to do with men, whose passions are perhaps equally turbulent with his own, he transfers by degrees to his instruction the prejudices which are first raised by his behaviour; and having forced upon his pupils an hatred of their teacher, he sees it quickly terminate in a contempt of the precept.

But instruction extends further than to seminaries of students, or the narrow auditories of sequestered literature. The end of learning is, to teach the publick, to superintend the conduct, watch over the morals, and regulate the opinions of parishes, dioceses, and provinces; to check vices in their first eruption, and suppress heresies in the whispers of their rise. And surely this awful, this arduous task, requires qualities, which a man "wise in his own conceit," cannot easily attain; that mildness of address, that patience of attention, that calmness of disputation, that selection of times, and places, and circumstances, which the vehemence of pride will not regard.

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And, in reality, it will generally be found, that the first objection and the last to an unacceptable pastor, is, that he is proud, that he is too wise for familiarity, and will not descend to the level with common understandings.

Such is the consequence of too high an esteem of our own powers and knowledge; it makes us in youth negligent, and in age useless; it teaches us too soon to be satisfied with our attainments; or it makes our attainments unpleasing, unpopular, and ineffectual; it neither suffers us to learn, nor to teach; but withholds us from those by whom we might be instructed, and drives those from us whom we might instruct. It is, therefore, necessary to obviate these evils, by inquiring,

SECONDLY: By what means this pernicious conceit of wisdom may be avoided or suppressed.

It might be imagined, if daily experience did not show us how vainly judgments are formed of real life, from speculative principles, that it might be easy for any man to extirpate a high conceit of human learning from his own heart, or that of another; since one great purpose of knowledge is to show us our own defects, follies, and miseries; yet, whatever be the reason, we find none more subject to this fault, than those whose course of life ought more particularly to exempt them from it.

For the suppression of this vain conceit, so injurious to the professors of learning, many considerations might be added to those which have already been drawn from its effects. The reasons, indeed, why every man should be humble, are inseparably connected with human nature; for what can any man see, either within or without himself, that does not afford him some reason to remark his own ignorance, imbecility, and meanness? But on these reflections it is less proper to insist, because they have been explained already by almost every writer upon moral and religious duties, and because, in reality, the pride which requires our chief caution is not so much absolute, as comparative. No man so much values himself upon the general prerogatives of human nature, as upon his

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own peculiar superiority to other men; nor will he, therefore, be humbled, by being told of the ignorance, the weakness, and wickedness of humanity; for he is satisfied with being accounted one of the most knowing, among the ignorant; the most able, among the weak; and the most virtuous, among the wicked.

The pride of the learned, therefore, can only be repressed by showing, what indeed, might easily be shown, that it is not justifiable, even upon comparison with the rest of men; for, without urging any thing, in derogation from the dignity and importance of learning in general, which must always, either immediately, or by the intervention of others, govern the world, it will be found, that they who are most disposed to be swelled to haughtiness by their own attainments, are generally so far from having any just claim to the superiority which they exert, that they are betrayed to vanity by ignorance: and are pleased with themselves, as a hind with his cottage, not because, upon inquiry, they are convinced of the reasonableness of the preference; but because they overvalue the little they possess, for want of knowing its littleness, and are contented with their own state, as a blind man feels no loss from the absence of beauty. Nor needs there any other proof of the origin of literary pride, than that it is chiefly to be found amongst those who have secluded themselves from the world, in pursuit of petty inquiries, and trivial studies.

To such men it should be recommended, that, before they suffer themselves to fix the rule of their own accomplishments, and look down on others with contempt, they should enjoin themselves to spend some time in inquiring into their own pretensions; and consider who they are whom they despise, and for what reason they suffer themselves to indulge the arrogance of contempt. Such an examination will soon drive back the pedant to his college, with juster conceptions, and with humbler sentiments; for he will find that those whom he imagined so much below his own exaltation, often flourish in the esteem of

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the world, while he himself is unknown; and teaching those arts, by which society is supported, and on which the happiness of the world depends; while he is pleasing himself with idle amusements, and wasting his life upon questions, of which very few desire the solution.

But if this method of obtaining humility be ineffectual, he may, however, establish it upon more strong and lasting principles, by applying himself to the duties of religion, and the word of God: that sacred and inscrutable word, which will show him the inefficacy of all other knowledge, and those duties which will imprint upon his mind, that he best understands the sacred writings who most carefully obeys them. Thus will humility fix a firm and lasting basis, by annihilation of all empty distinctions and petty competitions, by showing, that "one thing only is necessary," and that "God is all in all."

SERMON IX.

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. xi. 28.

Nothing is more frequently injurious to religion, or more dangerous to mankind, than the practice of adding to the Divine institutions, and of teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. The doctrines of the blessed sacrament, which, as they are expressed in the Holy Scriptures, do not seem to be very dark or difficult, yet have been so perverted and misrepresented, as to occasion many disputes among men of learning, and many divisions in the Christian world. In our own church, many religious minds have been filled with groundless apprehensions, and distracted with unnecessary inquietudes, by mistaken notions of the Lord's supper. Many have forborn to partake of it, because they have not, in their own

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opinion, arrived at that degree of holiness, required to it; which they erroneously conceive to be such, as indeed no mere man ever can attain; a holiness, which consists in little less than a complete exemption from sin, and an uniform and uninterrupted observance of every precept of religion. They find themselves unable to perform this duty without imperfections, and, therefore, they entirely neglect it; not considering, that the same reason is of equal force for the neglect of every duty; since none can be performed by us, in this frail state, without lapses, negligencies, and failings; and that God will accept unfeigned repentance, sincere intentions, and earnest endeavours, though entangled with many frailties. They do not consider that the participation of the sacrament is a duty enjoined upon all Christians, though all do not rise to equal degrees of virtue, and by consequence, that many must be admitted to the holy table, who have not reached the utmost heights of religious excellence. Heaven itself will be accessible to many who died in their struggles with sin; in their endeavours after virtue, and the beginning of a new life. And surely they are not to be excluded from commemorating the sufferings of our Saviour, in a Christian congregation, who would not be shut from heaven, from the assemblies of saints, and the choirs of angels.

There are some who neglect this duty, as they omit others, not from scruples of melancholy piety, or mistaken severity, but from supineness and carelessness, or an opinion that this precept is less necessary to be observed, than some others delivered by the same authority.

Many other notions, not well grounded, or capable of proof, are entertained of this institution; which I shall endeavour, without giving a particular account of them, to obviate and suppress, by shewing,

First: What is the nature and end of this institution, according to the Scriptures.

Secondly: What are the obligations which enforce the duty of communion. And,

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THIRDLY: What things are required of them that come to the Lord's supper.

FIRST: I propose to lay before you the nature and end of this institution, according to the Scriptures.

The account of the first institution of this sacrament is thus delivered by the Evangelist; Luke xxii. 19. "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." This narration is repeated in the epistle to the Corinthians, with this comment or explanation, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." From these passages compared then, it appears, that this sacrament is a representation of the death of our Saviour, appointed by himself, to be celebrated by all his followers, in all ages; to the end that by commemorating his sufferings in a solemn and public manner, they might declare their confidence in his merits, their belief of his mission, and their adherence to his religion.

It has likewise a tendency to increase this confidence, confirm this belief, and establish this adherence, not only by the new strength which every idea acquires by a new impression; and which every persuasion attains by new recollection, approbation, and meditation, but likewise by the supernatural and extraordinary influences of grace, and those blessings which God has annexed to the due use of means appointed by himself.

By commemorating the death of Christ, as the Redeemer of the world, we confess our belief in him; for why else should we perform so solemn a rite in commemoration of him? To confess our belief in him, is to declare ourselves his followers. We enter into an obligation to perform those conditions upon which he has admitted us to follow him, and to practise all the duties of that religion which he has taught us.

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This is implied in the word sacrament, which, being originally used to signify an oath of fidelity taken by the soldiers to their leaders, is now made use of by the church, to import a solemn vow, of unshaken adherence to the faith of Christ.

Thus the sacrament is a kind of repetition of baptism, the means whereby we are readmitted into the communion of the church of Christ, when we have, by sin, been separated from it; for every sin, and much more any habit or course of sin long continued, is, according to the different degrees of guilt, an apostasy or defection from our Saviour; as it is a breach of those conditions upon which we became his followers; and he that breaks the condition of a covenant, dissolves it on his side. Having, therefore, broken the covenant between us and our Redeemer, we lose the benefits of his death; nor can we have any hopes of obtaining them, while we remain in this state of separation from him.

But vain had been the suffering of our Saviour, had there not been left means of reconciliation to him; since every man falls away from him occasionally, by sins of negligence at least, and perhaps, by known, deliberate, premeditated offences. So that some method of renewing the covenant between God and man was necessary; and for this purpose this sacrament was instituted; which is, therefore, a renewal of our broken vows, a reentrance into the society of the church, and the act, by which we are restored to the benefits of our Saviour's death, upon performance of the terms prescribed by him.

So that this sacrament is a solemn ratification of a covenant renewed: by which, after having alienated ourselves from Christ by sin, we are restored, upon our repentance and reformation, to pardon and favour, and the certain hopes of everlasting life.

When we thus enter upon a new life by a solemn, deliberate, and serious dedication of ourselves to a more exact and vigilant service of God, and oblige ourselves to the duties of piety by this sacrament, we may hope to

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obtain, by fervent and humble prayer, such assistances from God as may enable us to perform those engagements, which we have entered into by his command, and in the manner appointed by him; always remembering, that we must use our own endeavours, and exert our utmost natural powers, for God only cooperates with the diligent and the watchful. We must avoid sin, by avoiding those occasions which betray us to it; and as we pray that we may not be led, we must be cautious of leading ourselves, into temptation.

All sin that is committed by Christians, is committed either through an absolute forgetfulness of God, for the time in which the inordinate passion, of whatever kind it be, predominates and prevails; or because, if the ideas of God and religion were present to our minds, they were not strong enough to overcome and suppress the desires excited by some pleasing, or the apprehensions raised by some terrible object. So that either the love or fear of temporal good or evil, were more powerful than the love or fear of God.

All ideas influence our conduct with more or less force, as they are more or less strongly impressed upon the mind; and they are impressed more strongly, as they are more frequently recollected or renewed. For every idea, whether of love, fear, grief, or any other passion, loses its force by time; and unless revived by accident or voluntary meditation, will at last vanish. But by dwelling upon, and indulging any idea, we may increase its efficacy and force, make it by degrees predominant in the soul, and raise it to an ascendant over our passions, so that it shall easily overrule those affections or appetites which formerly tyrannized within us.

Thus, by a neglect of God's worship and sacraments, a man may lose almost all distinction whatsoever of good and evil, and having no awe of the Divine power to oppose his inclinations to wickedness, may go forward from crime to crime without remorse. And he that struggles against vice, and is often overcome by

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powerful temptations, if, instead of giving way to idleness and despair, he continues his resistance, and, by a diligent attendance upon the service and sacraments of the church, together with a regular practice of private devotion, endeavours to strengthen his faith, and imprint upon himself an habitual attention to the laws of God, and a constant sense of his presence, he will soon find himself able to avoid the snares of sin; or, if he fall into them by inadvertency, to break them. He will find the fear of God grow superiour to the desires of wealth, or the love of pleasure; and, by persisting to frequent the church and sacraments, and thereby to preserve those notions of piety from being effaced or weakened, he will be able to persevere in a steady practice of virtue, and enjoy the unspeakable pleasures of a quiet conscience.

Thus it appears, that the blessed sacrament is a commemoration of the death of our Lord; consequently, a declaration of our faith; and both naturally, and by the cooperation of God, the means of increasing that faith. And it appears also that it is a renewal of our baptismal vow, after we have broken it by sin; and a renovation of that covenant by which we are adopted the followers of Jesus, and made partakers of his merits, and the benefits of his death.

This account has almost anticipated what I professed to treat of,

SECONDLY: The obligations which enforce the duty of communion.

For the obligations to any duty must bear proportion to the importance of it; and the importance of a duty must be rated by the effect which it produces or promotes; and, therefore, as the benefits which we receive from this sacrament have been already shown, the necessity of it is sufficiently apparent.

But we may farther enforce this practice upon ourselves and others, by considering first, that it is a positive injunction of our blessed Saviour, which, therefore, all those who believe in him are bound to obey. That to

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dispute the usefulness, or call in question the necessity of it, is to reform his religion, and to set up our own wisdom in opposition to his commands; and that to refuse the means of grace, is to place our confidence in our own strength, and to neglect the assistance of that Comforter, who came down from heaven according to the most true promise of our blessed Saviour, to lead the apostles out of darkness and errour, and to guide them and us into the clear light and certain knowledge of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ.

If we consider this sacrament as a renewal of the vow of baptism, and the means of reconciling us to God, and restoring us to a participation of the merits of our Saviour, which we had forfeited by sin, we shall need no persuasions to a frequent communion. For certainly nothing can be more dreadful than to live under the displeasure of God, in constant danger of appearing before him while he is yet unappeased, and of losing the benefits of our redemption. Whoever he be, whom sin has deluded and led away, let him not delay to return to his duty, lest some sudden disease seize upon him, and the hand of death cut him off for ever from any possibility of reformation, while he is indolent and voluptuous, irreligious, and profane. It will be too late to bewail his supineness, and lament his folly, when the dreadful and irrevocable sentence is past, and the gates of hell are closed upon him. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye on him while he is near! Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

But lest, instead of obtaining pardon, we aggravate our sins, by coming unprepared to the holy table, let us consider,

THIRDLY: What is required of them that come to the Lord's Supper.

With respect to the preparatory duties requisite to a worthy reception of the sacrament, Saint Paul has left

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this precept; "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread." Which will be easily explained, by recurring to what has been already said of the nature of the sacrament.

By partaking of the communion, we declare, in the most solemn manner, in the presence of God and man, that we hold the faith of Jesus; that we are his followers, who expect eternal salvation from his merits; and, therefore, that we engage ourselves to that obedience to his commands, and that strictness and regularity of life, which he requires from those who place their confidence in his mediation. We profess, likewise, that we sincerely and humbly repent of those offences by which we have separated ourselves from him; and that, in consequence of this profession, we unite ourselves again to the communion of the church.

Nothing can be more reasonable, before this solemn profession, than that a man examine himself, whether it be true; whether he really and unfeignedly resolves to accept the conditions of salvation offered to him, and to perform his part of the covenant which he comes to ratify; or, whether he is not about to mock God; to profess a faith which he does not hold, and a purity which he does not intend to aim at.

The terms, upon which we are to hope for any benefits from the merits of Christ, are faith, repentance, and subsequent obedience. These are, therefore, the three chief and general heads of examination. We cannot receive the sacrament, unless we believe in Christ, because by receiving it we declare our belief in him, and a lying tongue is an abomination to the Lord. We cannot receive it without repentance, because repentance is the means by which, after sin, we are reconciled to God; and we cannot, without dreadful wickedness, by partaking of the outward tokens of reconciliation, declare that we believe God at peace with our souls, when we know that, by the omission of repentance, we are yet in a state of voluntary alienation from him. We cannot receive it, without

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a sincere intention of obedience; because, by declaring ourselves his followers, we enter into obligations to obey his commandments. We are, therefore, not transiently and carelessly, but frequently and seriously, to ask ourselves, whether we firmly believe the promises of our Saviour—whether we repent of our sins—and resolve, for the future, to avoid all those things which God has forbidden, and practise all those which he has commanded. And when any man is convinced that he has formed real resolutions of a new life, let him pray for strength and constancy to persevere in them; and let him come joyfully to the holy table, in sure confidence of pardon, reconciliation, and life everlasting.

Which that we may all obtain, God of his infinite mercy grant, for the merits of Jesus Christ, our Saviour! to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, three Persons and one God, be ascribed all honour, adoration, and praise, now and for ever! Amen.

SERMON X.

"Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." GAL. vi. 7.

ONE of the mighty blessings bestowed upon us by the Christian revelation, is, that we have now a certain knowledge of a future state, and of the rewards and punishments that await us after death, and will be adjusted according to our conduct in this world. We, on whom the light of the gospel shines, walk no longer in darkness, doubtful of the benefit of good, or the danger of bad actions; we know, that we live and act under the eye of our Father and our Judge, by whom nothing is overlooked or forgotten, and who, though to try our obedience he suffers, in the present state of things, the same events

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to happen to the good and to the evil, will, at last, certainly distinguish them, by allotting them different conditions beyond the grave; when it will appear, in the sight of men and of angels, how amiable is godliness, and how odious is sin; by the final sentence, which shall bring upon man the consequences of his own actions, so as, that "whatsoever a man shall sow, that shall he reap."

The ancient heathens, with whose notions we are acquainted, how far soever they might have carried their speculations of moral or civil wisdom, had no conception of a future state, except idle fictions, which those who considered them treated as ridiculous; or dark conjectures, formed by men of deep thoughts and great inquiry, but neither, in themselves, capable of compelling conviction, nor brought at all to the knowledge of the gross of mankind, of those who lived in pleasure and idleness, or in solitude and labour; they were confined to the closet of the student, or the school of the lecturer, and were very little diffused among the busy or the vulgar.

There is no reason to wonder, that many enormities should prevail where there was nothing to oppose them. When we consider the various and perpetual temptations of appetite within, and interest without; when we see, that on every side there is something that solicits the desires, and which cannot be innocently obtained; what can we then expect, but that, notwithstanding all the securities of the law, and all the vigilance of magistrates, those that know of no other world will eagerly make the most of this, and please themselves whenever they can, with very little regard to the right of others?

As the state of the heathens was a state of darkness, it must have been a state, likewise, of disorder; a state of perpetual contest for the goods of this life, and by consequence of perpetual danger to those who abounded, and of temptation to those that were in want.

The Jews enjoyed a very ample communication of the Divine will, and had a religion which an inspired legislator had prescribed. But even to this nation, the only

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nation free from idolatry, and acquainted with the perfections of the true God, was the doctrine of a future state so obscurely revealed, that it was not necessarily consequential to the reception, or observation, of their practical religion. The Sadducees who acknowledged the authority of the Mosaical law, yet denied the separate existence of the soul—had no expectation of a future state. They held that there was no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit.

This was not in those times the general state of the Jewish nation; the Pharisees held the resurrection, and with them probably far the greater part of the people; but that any man could be a Jew, and yet deny a future state, is a sufficient proof that it had not yet been clearly revealed, and that it was reserved for the preachers of Christianity to bring life and immortality to light. In such a degree of light they are now placed, that they can be denied or doubted no longer, but as the gospel, that shows them, is doubted or denied. It is now certain that we are here, not in our total, nor in our ultimate existence, but in a state of exercise and probation, commanded to qualify ourselves, by pure hearts and virtuous actions, for the enjoyment of future felicity in the presence of God; and prohibited to break the laws which his wisdom has given us, under the penal sanction of banishment from heaven into regions of misery.

Yet, notwithstanding the express declaration of our Saviour, and the constant reference of our actions and duties to a future state, throughout the whole volume of the New Testament; there are yet, as in the apostles' time, men who are deceived, who act as if they thought God would be mocked or deluded, and who appear to forget, that "whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap."

From this important caution, given by the apostle immediately to those whom he was then directing, and consequently to all professors of the religion of Christ, occasion may be taken to consider,

FIRST: How sinners are "deceived."

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SECONDLY: How certain it is, that "God is not mocked."

THIRDLY: In what sense it is to be understood, that, "whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap."

In examining, first, how sinners are deceived, it will immediately occur to us, that no man is deceived to his damnation but by the devil himself. The subtleties of the devil are undoubtedly many; he has probably the power of presenting opportunities of sin, and at the same time of inflaming the passions, of suggesting evil desires, and interrupting holy meditations; but his power is so limited by the Governour of the universe, that he cannot hurt us without our own consent; his power is but like that of a wicked companion, who may solicit us to crimes or follies, but with whom we feel no necessity of complying; he, therefore, that yields to temptation, has the greater part in his own destruction; he has been warned of his danger, he has been taught his duty; and if these warnings and instructions have had no effect, he may be said voluntarily to desert the right way, and not so much to be deceived by another, as to deceive himself.

Of self-deceit, in the great business of our lives, there are various modes. The far greater part of mankind deceive themselves, by willing negligence, by refusing to think on their real state, lest such thoughts should trouble their quiet, or interrupt their pursuits. To live religiously, is to walk, not by sight, but by faith; to act in confidence of things unseen, in hope of future recompense, and in fear of future punishment. To abstract the thoughts from things spiritual is not difficult; things future do not obtrude themselves upon the senses, and therefore easily give way to external objects. He that is willing to forget religion may quickly lose it; and that most men are willing to forget it, experience informs us. If we look into the gay or the busy world, we see every eye directed towards pleasure or advantage, and every hour filled with expectation, or occupied by employment, and day passed

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after day in the enjoyment of success, or the vexation of disappointment.

Nor is it true only of men who are engaged in enterprises of hazard, which restrain the faculties to the utmost, and keep attention always upon the stretch. Religion is not only neglected by the projector and adventurer, by men who suspend their happiness on the slender thread of artifice, or stand tottering upon the point of chance. For, if we visit the most cool and regular parts of the community, if we turn our eye to the farm, or to the shop, where one year glides uniformly after another, and nothing new or important is either expected or dreaded; yet still the same indifference about eternity will be found. There is no interest so small, nor engagement so slight, but that, if it be followed and expanded, it may be sufficient to keep religion out of the thoughts. Many men may be observed, not agitated by very violent passions, nor overborn by any powerful habits, nor depraved by any great degrees of wickedness; men who are honest dealers, faithful friends, and inoffensive neighbours; who yet have no vital principle of religion; who live wholly without self-examination: and indulge any desire that happens to arise, with very little resistance or compunction; who hardly know what it is to combat a temptation, or to repent of a fault; but go on, neither self-approved, nor self-condemned; not endeavouring after any excellence, nor reforming any vitious practice, or irregular desire. They have no care of futurity; neither is God in all their thoughts; they direct none of their actions to his glory, they do nothing with the hope of pleasing, they avoid nothing for the fear of offending him. Those men want not much of being religious; they have nothing more than casual views to reform, and, from being peaceable and temperate heathens, might, if they would once awaken to their eternal interest, become pious and exemplary Christians. But let them not be deceived; they cannot suppose that God will accept him who never wished to be accepted by him, or made his will the rule of action.

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Others there are, who, without attending to the written revelation of God's will, form to themselves a scheme of conduct in which vice is mingled with virtue, and who cover from themselves, and hope to cover from God, the indulgence of some criminal desire, or the continuance of some vicious habit, by a few splendid instances of public spirit, or some few effusions of occasional bounty. But to these men it may, with emphatical propriety, be urged, that "God is not mocked;" he will not be worshipped nor obeyed but according to his own laws.

The mode of self-deception which prevails most in the world, and by which the greatest number of souls is at last betrayed to destruction, is the art which we are all too apt to practise, of putting far from us the evil day, of setting the hour of death, and the day of account, at a great distance.

That death is certain, every one knows; nor is it less known, that life is destroyed, at all ages, by a thousand causes; that the strong and the vigorous are liable to diseases, and that caution and temperance afford no security against the final stroke. Yet, as the thought of dissolution is dreadful, we do not willingly admit it; the desire of life is connected with animation; every living being shrinks from his destruction; to wish, and to hope, are never far asunder; as we wish for long life, we hope that our wishes will be granted; and what we hope, we either believe, or do not examine. So tenaciously does our credulity lay hold of life, that it is rare to find any man so old as not to expect an addition to his years, or so far wasted and enfeebled with disease, as not to flatter himself with hopes of recovery.

To those who procrastinate amendment in hopes of better opportunities in future time, it is too often vainly urged by the preacher, and vainly suggested by a thousand examples, that the hour of death is uncertain. This, which ought to be the cause of their terrour, is the ground of their hope; that, as death is uncertain, it may be distant. This uncertainty is, in effect, the great support of

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the whole system of life. The man who died yesterday had purchased an estate, to which he intended some time to retire; or built a house, which he was hereafter to inhabit; and planted gardens and groves, that, in a certain number of years, were to supply delicacies to his feasts, and shades to his meditations. He is snatched away, and has left his designs and his labours to others.

As men please themselves with felicities to be enjoyed in the days of leisure and retreat; so among these felicities, it is not uncommon to design a reformation of life, and a course of piety. Among the more enlightened and judicious part of mankind, there are many who live in a continual disapprobation of their own conduct, who know, that they do every day what they ought to leave undone, and every day leave undone what they ought to do; and who, therefore, consider themselves as living under the Divine displeasure, in a state in which it would be very dangerous to die. Such men answer the reproaches of conscience with sincerity and intention of performance, but which they consider as debts to be discharged at some remote time. They neither sin with stupid negligence, nor with impious defiance of the Divine laws; they fear the punishments denounced against sin, but pacify their anxiety with possibilities of repentance, and with a plan of life to be led according to the strict precepts of religion, and to be closed at last by a death softened by holy consolations. Projects of future piety are perhaps not less common than of future pleasure, and are, as there is reason to fear, not less commonly interrupted; with this dreadful difference, that he who misses his intended pleasure, escapes a disappointment; but he who is cut off before the season of repentance, is exposed to the vengeance of an angry God.

Whoever has been deluded by this infatuation, and has hitherto neglected those duties which he intends some time to perform, is admonished, by all the principles of prudence, and all the course of nature, to consider, how much he ventures, and with how little probability in his

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favour. The continuance of life, though, like all other things, adjusted by providence, may be properly considered by us casual; and wisdom always directs us, not to leave that to chance which may be made certain, and not to venture any thing upon chance which it will much hurt us to lose.

He who, accused by his conscience of habitual disobedience, defers his reformation, apparently leaves his soul in the power of chance. We are in full possession of the present moment; let the present moment be improved; let that which must necessarily be done some time, be no longer neglected. Let us remember, that if our lot should fall otherwise than we suppose; if we are of the number of them to whom length of life is not granted; we lose what can never be recovered, and what will never be recompensed,—the mercy of God, and the joys of futurity.

That long life is not commonly granted, is sufficiently apparent; for life is called long, not as being, in its greatest length, of much duration, but as being longer than common. Since, therefore, the common condition of man is not to live long, we have no reason to conclude, that what happens to few will happen to us.

But, to abate our confidence in our own resolutions, it is to be remembered, that though we should arrive at the great year, destined for the change of life, it is by no means certain that we shall effect what we have purposed. Age is shackled with infirmity and diseases. Immediate pain and present vexation will then do what amusement and gaiety did before, will enchain the attention, and occupy the thoughts, and leave little vacancy for the past or future. Whoever suffers great pain, has no other care than to obtain ease; and if ease is for a time obtained, he values it too much, to lessen it by painful reflection.

Neither is an efficacious repentance so easy a work, as that we may be sure of performing it, at the time appointed by ourselves. The longer habits have been indulged, the more imperious they become; it is not by bidding them to be gone, that we can at once dismiss

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them; they may be suppressed and lie dormant for a time, and resume their force, at an unexpected moment, by some sudden temptation; they can be subdued only by continued caution and repeated conflicts.

The longer sin has been indulged, the more irksome will be the retrospect of life. So much uneasiness will be suffered, at the review of years spent in vicious enjoyment, that there is reason to fear, lest that delay, which began in the love of pleasure, will be continued for fear of pain.

Neither is it certain, that the grace, without which no man can correct his own corruption, when it has been offered and refused, will be offered again; or that he who stopped his ears against the first call, will be vouchsafed a second. He cannot expect to be received among the servants of God, who will obey him only at his own time; for such presumption is, in some degree, a mockery of God; and we are to consider, secondly, how certain it is, that "God is not mocked."

God is not mocked in any sense. He will not be mocked with counterfeit piety, he will not be mocked with idle resolutions; but the sense in which the text declares, that "God is not mocked," seems to be, that God will not suffer his decrees to be invalidated; he will not leave his promises unfulfilled, nor his threats unexecuted. And this will easily appear, if we consider, that promises and threats can only become ineffectual by change of mind, or want of power. God cannot change his will; "he is not a man that he should repent;" what he has spoken will surely come to pass. Neither can he want power to execute his purposes; he who spoke, and the world was made, can speak again, and it will perish. God's "arm is not shortened, that he cannot save;" neither is it shortened, that he cannot punish; and that he will do to every man according to his works, will be shown, when we have considered,

THIRDLY: In what sense it is to be understood, that "whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap."

To sow and to reap are figurative terms. To sow, sig-

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nifies to act; and to reap, is to receive the product of our actions. As no man can sow one sort of grain, and reap another, in the ordinary process of nature; as no man gathers grapes of thorns or figs of thistles, or when he scatters tares in the furrows, gathers wheat into his garners; so, in the final dispensations of providence, the same correspondence shall be found in the moral system; every action shall at last be followed by its due consequences; we shall be treated according to our obedience or transgressions; the good shall not miss their reward, nor the wicked escape their punishment; but when men shall give account of their own works, they that have done good shall pass into everlasting life, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.

Let us, therefore, at this and at all times, most heartily and fervently beseech almighty God to give us faithful and sincere repentance, to pardon and forgive us all our sins, to endue us with the grace of his Holy Spirit, and to amend our lives according to his holy will and commandments.

SERMON XI.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." 1 PETER iii. 8.

THE apostle, directing this epistle to the new converts, scattered over the provinces of Asia, having laid before them the great advantage of the religion which they had embraced, no less than the salvation of their souls, and the high price for which they were redeemed, the precious blood of Christ, proceeds to explain to them what is required by their new profession. He reminds them, that they live among the heathen, of whom it must necessarily be supposed, that every one watched their conduct with suspicious vigilance; and that it is their duty to recom-

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mend right belief, by virtuous practice; that their example, as well as their arguments, may propagate the truth.

In this course of instruction, he first mentions the civil relations of governours and subjects; and enjoins them to honour the supreme magistrate, and to respect all subordinate authority, which is established for the preservation of order, and the administration of justice. He then descends to domestick connections, and recommends to servants obedience and patience, and to husbands and wives their relative and respective duties, to husbands tenderness, and to wives obedience, modesty, and gentleness; that the husband, who is not yet converted by the power of exhortation, may be drawn to the religion of his wife, by perceiving its good effects upon her conversation and behaviour.

He then extends his precepts to greater generality, and lays down a short system of domestick virtue to be universally adopted; directing the new Christians,

FIRST: To be all of one mind.

By the union of minds which the apostle recommends, it must be supposed that he means not speculative, but practical union; not similitude of opinions, but similitude of virtues. In religious opinions, if there was then any disagreement, they had then living authority to which they might have recourse; and their business was probably, at that time, more to defend their common faith against the heathen, than to debate any subtilties of opinion among themselves. But there are innumerable questions, in which vanity or interest engages mankind, which have little connection with their eternal interest; and yet often inflame the passions, and produce dislike and malevolence. Sects in philosophy, and factions in the state, easily excite mutual contempt, or mutual hatred. He whose opinions are censured, feels the reputation of his understanding injured; he, whose party is opposed, finds his influence resisted, and perhaps his power, or his profit, in danger of diminution. It could not be the intention of St. Peter, that all men should think

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alike, either of the operations of nature, or the transactions of the state; but that those who thought differently should live in peace; that contradiction should not exasperate the disputants, or that the heat should end with the controversy, and that the opposition of party, (for such there must sometimes be,) should not canker the private thoughts, or raise personal hatred or insidious enmity. He required that they should be all of one moral mind, that they should all wish and promote the happiness of each other, that the danger of a Christian should be a common cause, and that no one should wish for advantage by the miscarriage of another.

To suppose that there should, in any community, be no difference of opinion, is to suppose all, of whom that community consists, to be wise alike, which cannot happen; or that the understanding of one part is submitted to that of another, which, however, would not produce uniformity of opinion, but only of profession; and is, in important questions, contrary to that sincerity and integrity which truth requires, and an infraction of that liberty which reason allows. But that men, of different opinions, should live at peace, is the true effect of that humility, which makes each esteem others better than himself, and of that moderation, which reason approves, and charity commands. Be ye therefore all of one mind; let charity be the predominant and universal principle that pervades your lives, and regulates your actions.

SECONDLY: They are directed by the apostle, to live as men which have compassion one of another.

The word which is rendered *having compassion*, seems to include a greater latitude of signification, than the word compassion commonly obtains. Compassion is not used, but in the sense of tender regard to the unhappiness of another. But the term used by St. Peter may mean mutually feeling for each other, receiving the same impressions from the same things; and this sense seems to be given it by one of the translators. (Castalio.) The precept will then be connected and consequential, "Be ye all of

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one mind," each feeling, by sympathy, the affections of another.

Sympathy, the quality recommended in the text, as it has been now explained, is the great source of social happiness. To gain affection, and to preserve concord, it is necessary not only to "mourn with those that mourn," but to "rejoice with them that rejoice."

To feel sincere and honest joy at the success of another, though it is necessary to true friendship, is perhaps neither very common, nor very easy. There is in every mind, implanted by nature, a desire of superiority, which counteracts the pleasure, which the sight of success and happiness ought always to impart. Between men of equal condition, and therefore willingly consulting with each other, any flow of fortune, which produces inequality, makes him who is left behind look with less content on his own condition, and with less kindness on him who has reduced him to inferiority. The advancement of a superiour gives pain by increasing that distance, by difference of station, which was thought already greater than could be claimed by any difference: and the rise of an inferiour excites jealousy, lest he that went before should be overtaken by his follower. As cruelty looks upon misery without partaking pain, so envy beholds increase of happiness without partaking joy.

Envy and cruelty, the most hateful passions of the human breast, are both counteracted by this precept, which commanded the Christians of Asia, and now commands us, who succeed them in the profession of the same faith, and the consciousness of the same frailties, to feel one for another. He whose mind is so harmonized to the interest of his neighbour, that good and evil is common to them both, will neither obstruct his rise, nor insult his fall; but will be willing to cooperate with him through all the vicissitudes of life, and dispensations of providence; to honour him that is exalted, to help him that is depressed. He will control all those emotions which comparison produces; he will not consider himself as made poorer by

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another's wealth, or richer by another's poverty: he will look, without malignity, upon superiority, either external or intellectual: he will be willing to learn of those that excel in wisdom, and receive instruction with thankfulness; he will be willing to impart his knowledge, without fearing lest he should impair his own importance by the improvement of his hearer.

How much this generous sympathy would conduce to the comfort and stability of life, a little consideration will convince us. Whence are all the arts of slanders and depreciation, but from our unwillingness to see others greater, or wiser, or happier, than ourselves? Whence is a great part of the splendour, and all the ostentation of high rank, but to receive pleasure from the contemplation of those who cannot attain dignity and riches, or to give pain to them who look with malignity on those acquisitions which they have desired in vain? Whence is the pain which vanity suffers from neglect, but that it exacted painful homage, and honour which is received with more delight, as it is more unwillingly conferred? The pleasures of comparative excellence have commonly their source in the pain of others, and, therefore, are such pleasures as the apostle warns the Christians not to indulge.

THIRDLY: In pursuance of his injunctions to be of one mind, and to sympathize one with another, he directs them, to love as brethren, or to be lovers of the brethren. (Hammond.) He endeavours to establish a species of fraternity among Christians; that, as they have all one faith, they may have all one interest, and consider themselves as a family that must prosper, or suffer all together, and share whatever may befall, either of good or evil. The highest degree of friendship is called brotherly love; and the term by which man is endeared to man, in the language of the gospel, is the appellation of brother. We are all brethren by our common relation to the universal Father; but that relation is often forgotten amongst the contrariety of opinions, and opposition of passions, which disturb the peace of the world.

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Ambition has effaced all natural consanguinity, by calling nation to war against nation, and making the destruction of one half of mankind the glory of the other. Christian piety, as it revived and enforced all the original and primæval duties of humanity, so it restored, in some degree, that brotherhood, or foundation of kindness, which naturally arises from some common relation. We are brothers as we are men; we are again brothers as we are Christians; as men, we are brothers by natural necessity; but as Christians, we are brothers by voluntary choice, and are, therefore, under an apparent obligation to fulfil the relation; first, as it is established by our Creator, and, afterwards, as it is chosen by ourselves. To have the same opinions naturally produces kindness, even when these opinions have no consequence; because we rejoice to find our sentiments approved by the judgment of another. But those who concur in Christianity have, by that agreement in principles, an opportunity of more than speculative kindness; they may help forward the salvation of each other, by counsel or by reproof, by exhortation, by example; they may recall each other from deviations, they may excite each other to good works.

Charity, or universal love, is named by Saint Paul, as the greatest and most illustrious of Christian virtues; and our Saviour himself has told us, that by this it shall be known that we are his disciples, if we love one another. Every affection of the soul exerts itself more strongly at the approach of its proper object. Christians particularly love one another, because they can confer and receive spiritual benefits. They are indeed to love all men; and how much the primitive preachers of the gospel loved those that differed from them, they sufficiently showed, when they incurred death by their endeavours to make them Christians. This is the extent of evangelical love, to bring into the light of truth those who are in darkness, and to keep those from falling back into darkness to whom the light has been shown.

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Since life overflows with misery, and the world is filled with evil, natural and moral, with temptation and danger, with calamity and wickedness, there are very frequent opportunities of showing our unanimity, our sympathy, and our brotherly love, by attempts to remove pressures, and mitigate misfortunes. St. Peter, therefore, particularly presses the duty of commiseration, by calling upon us,

FOURTHLY: To be pitiful; not to look negligently, or scornfully, on the miseries of others; but to apply such consolation and assistance as providence puts into our power.

To attempt an enumeration of all the opportunities which may occur for the exercise of pity, would be to form a catalogue of all the ills to which human nature is exposed, to count over all the possibilities of calamity, and recount the depredations of time, the pains of disease, the blasts of casualty, and the mischiefs of malevolence.

Wherever the eye is turned it sees much misery, and there is much which it sees not; many complaints are heard, and there are many pangs without complaint. The external acts of mercy, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to visit the sick and the prisoners, we see daily opportunities of performing; and it may be hoped, they are not neglected by those that abound with what others want.

But there are other calls upon charity. There are sick minds as well as sick bodies; there are understandings perplexed with scruples, there are consciences tormented with guilt; nor can any greater benefit be conferred, than that of settling doubts, or comforting despair, and restoring a disquieted soul to hope and tranquillity.

The duty of commiseration is so strongly pressed by the gospel, that none deny its obligation. But as the measures of beneficence are left undefined, every man necessarily determines for himself, whether he has contributed his share to the necessities of others; and amidst

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the general depravity of the world, it can be no wonder if there are found some who tax themselves very lightly, and are satisfied with giving very little.

Some readily find out, that where there is distress there is vice, and easily discover the crime of feeding the lazy, or encouraging the dissolute. To promote vice is certainly unlawful; but we do not always encourage vice when we relieve the vicious. It is sufficient that our brother is in want; by which way he brought his want upon him, let us not too curiously inquire. We likewise are sinners. In cases undoubted and notorious, some caution may be properly used, that charity be not perverted; but no man is so bad as to lose his title to Christian kindness. If a bad man be suffered to perish, how shall he repent?

Not more justifiable is the omission of duty, which proceeds from an expectation of better opportunities, or more pressing exigencies. Of such excuses, or of such purposes, there can be no end. Delay not till to-morrow what thou mayest do to-day! A good work is now in thy power, be quick and perform it! By thy refusal, others may be discouraged from asking; or so near may be the end of thy life, that thou mayest never do what is in thy heart. Every call to charity is a gift of God, to be received with thankfulness, and improved with diligence.

There are likewise many offices of kindness which cannot properly be classed under the duty of commiseration, as they do not presuppose either misery or necessity, and yet are of great use for conciliating affection, and smoothing the paths of life; and, as it is of great importance that goodness should have the power of gaining the affections, the apostle has not neglected those subordinate duties, for he commands Christians,

FIFTHLY: To be courteous.

For courteous some substitute the word humble; the difference may not be considered as great, for pride is a quality that obstructs courtesy.

That a precept of courtesy is by no means unworthy of the gravity and dignity of an apostolical mandate, may be

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gathered from the pernicious effects which all must have observed to have arisen from harsh strictness and sour virtue; such as refuses to mingle in harmless gaiety, or give countenance to innocent amusements, or which transacts the petty business of the day with a gloomy ferociousness that clouds existence. Goodness of this character is more formidable than lovely; it may drive away vice from its presence, but will never persuade it to stay to be amended; it may teach, it may remonstrate, but the hearer will seek for more mild instruction. To those, therefore, by whose conversation the heathens were to be drawn away from errour and wickedness, it is the apostle's precept, that they be courteous, that they accommodate themselves, as far as innocence allows, to the will of others; that they should practise all the established modes of civility, seize all occasions of cultivating kindness, and live with the rest of the world with an amicable reciprocation of cursory civility, that Christianity might not be accused of making men less cheerful as companions, less sociable as neighbours, or less useful as friends.

Such is the system of domestick virtue which the apostle recommends. His words are few, but their meaning is sufficient to fill the greater part of the circle of life. Let us remember to be all of one mind, so as to grieve and rejoice together; to confirm, by constant benevolence, that brotherhood which creation and redemption have constituted! Let us commiserate and relieve affliction, and endear ourselves by general gentleness and affability: it will from hence soon appear how much goodness is to be loved, and how much human nature is meliorated by religion.

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SERMON XII.

"I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." ECCL. i. 14.

THAT all human actions terminate in vanity, and all human hopes will end in vexation, is a position, from which nature withholds our credulity, and which our fondness for the present life, and worldly enjoyments, disposes us to doubt, however forcibly it may be urged upon us, by reason or experience.

Every man will readily enough confess, that his own condition discontents him; and that he has not yet been able, with all his labour, to make happiness, or, with all his inquiries, to find it. But he still thinks, it is somewhere to be found, or by some means to be procured. His envy sometimes persuades him to imagine, that others possess it; and his ambition points the way, by which he supposes that he shall reach, at last, the station to which it is annexed. Every one wants something to happiness; and when he has gained what he first wanted, he wants something else; he wears out life in efforts and pursuits, and perhaps dies, regretting that he must leave the world, when he is about to enjoy it.

So great is our interest, or so great we think it, to believe ourselves able to procure our own happiness, that experience never convinces us of our impotence; and, indeed, our miscarriages might be reasonably enough imputed by us, to our own unskilfulness, or ignorance; if we were able to derive intelligence from no experience but our own. But surely we may be content to credit the general voice of mankind, complaining incessantly of general infelicity: and when we see the restlessness of the young, and peevishness of the old; when we find the daring and the active combating misery, and the calm

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and humble lamenting it; when the vigorous are exhausting themselves in struggles with their own condition, and the old and the wise retiring from the contest, in weariness and despondency; we may be content, at last, to conclude, that if happiness had been to be found, some would have found it, and that it is vain to search longer for what all have missed.

But though our obstinacy should hold out, against common experience and common authority, it might at least give way to the declaration of Solomon, who has left this testimony to succeeding ages, that all human pursuits and labours are vanity. From the like conclusion made by other men, we may escape, by considering, that their experience was small, and their power narrow; that they pronounced with confidence upon that which they could not know; and that many pleasures might be above their reach, and many more beyond their observation; they may be considered, as uttering the dictates of discontent, rather than persuasion; and as speaking not so much of the general state of things, as of their own share, and their own situation.

But the character of Solomon leaves no room for subterfuge; he did not judge of what he did not know. He had in his possession, whatever power and riches, and, what is still more, whatever wisdom and knowledge could confer. As he understood the vegetable creation, from the cedar of Libanus, to the hysop on the wall; so there is no doubt, but he had taken a survey of all the gradations of human life, from the throne of the prince, to the shepherd's cottage. He had in his hand all the instruments of happiness, and in his mind the skill to apply them. Every power of delight which others possessed, he had authority to summon, or wealth to purchase; all that royal prosperity could supply, was accumulated upon him; at home he had peace, and in foreign countries he had honour; what every nation could supply, was poured down before him. If power be grateful, he was a king; if there be pleasure in knowledge, he was

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the wisest of mankind; if wealth can purchase happiness, he had so much gold, that silver was little regarded. Over all these advantages, presided a mind, in the highest degree disposed to magnificence and voluptuousness, so eager in pursuit of gratification, that, alas! after every other price had been bid for happiness, religion and virtue were brought to the sale. But, after the anxiety of his inquiries, the weariness of his labours, and the loss of his innocence, he obtained only this conclusion: "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

That this result of Solomon's experience, thus solemnly bequeathed by him to all generations, may not be transmitted to us without its proper use; let us diligently consider,

FIRST: In what sense we are to understand, that all is vanity.

SECONDLY: How far the conviction, that all is vanity, ought to influence the conduct of life.

THIRDLY: What consequences the serious and religious mind may deduce from the position, that all is vanity.

When we examine, first, in what sense we are to understand that all is vanity; we must remember, that the preacher is not speaking of religious practices, or of any actions immediately commanded by God, or directly referred to him; but of such employments as we pursue by choice, and such works as we perform in hopes of a recompense in the present life; such as flatter the imagination with pleasing scenes, and probable increase of temporal felicity; of this he determines that all is vanity, and every hour confirms his determination.

The event of all human endeavours is uncertain. He that plants may gather no fruit; he that sows may reap no harvest. Even the most simple operations are liable to miscarriage, from causes which we cannot foresee; and if we could foresee them, cannot prevent. What can be more vain than the confidence of man, when the annual

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provision made for the support of life is not only exposed to the uncertainty of weather, and the variation of the sky, but lies at the mercy of the reptiles of the earth or the insects of the air? The rain and the wind he cannot command; the caterpillar he cannot destroy; and the locust he cannot drive away.

But these effects, which require only the concurrence of natural causes, though they depend little upon human power, are yet made by providence regular and certain, in comparison with those extensive and complicated undertakings, which must be brought to pass by the agency of man, and which require the union of many understandings, and the cooperations of many hands. The history of mankind is little else than a narrative of designs which have failed, and hopes that have been disappointed. In all matters of emulation and contest, the success of one implies the defeat of another, and at least half the transaction terminates in misery. And in designs not directly contrary to the interest of another, and, therefore, not opposed either by artifice or violence, it frequently happens, that by negligence or mistake, or unseasonable officiousness, a very hopeful project is brought to nothing.

To find examples of disappointment and uncertainty, we need not raise our thoughts to the interests of nations, nor follow the warrior to the field, or the statesman to the council. The little transactions of private families are entangled with perplexities; and the hourly occurrences of common life are filling the world with discontent and complaint. Every man hopes for kindness from his friends, diligence from his servants, and obedience from his children; yet friends are often unfaithful, servants negligent, and children rebellious. Human wisdom has, indeed, exhausted its power in giving rules for the conduct of life; but those rules are themselves but vanities. They are difficult to be observed, and, though observed, are uncertain in the effect.

The labours of man are not only uncertain, but imperfect. If we perform what we design, we yet do not ob-

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tain what we expected. What appeared great when we desired it, seems little when it is attained; the wish is still unsatisfied, and something always remains behind, without which the gratification is incomplete. He that rises to greatness finds himself in danger; he that obtains riches perceives that he cannot gain esteem. He that is caressed, sees interest lurking under kindness; and he that hears his own praises, suspects that he is flattered. Discontent and doubt are always pursuing us. Our endeavours end without performance, and performance ends without satisfaction.

But, since this uncertainty and imperfection is the lot which our Creator has appointed for us, we are to inquire,

SECONDLY: How far the conviction, that all is vanity, ought to influence the conduct of life.

Human actions may be distinguished into various classes. Some are actions of duty, which can never be vain, because God will reward them. Yet these actions, considered as terminating in this world, will often produce vexation. It is our duty to admonish the vitious, to instruct the ignorant, and relieve the poor; and our admonitions will, sometimes, produce anger, instead of amendment; our instructions will be sometimes bestowed upon the perverse, the stupid, and the inattentive; and our charity will be sometimes misapplied by those that receive it; and, instead of feeding the hungry, will pamper the intemperate; but these disappointments do not make good actions vain, though they show us how much all success depends upon causes on which we have no influence.

There are likewise actions of necessity; these are often vain and vexatious; but such is the order of the world, that they cannot be omitted. He that will eat bread, must plough and sow; though it is not certain that he who ploughs and sows shall eat bread. It is appointed, that life should be sustained by labour; and we must not sink down in sullen idleness, when our industry is per-

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mitted to miscarry. We shall often have occasion to remember the sentence denounced by the preacher upon all that is done under the sun; but we must still prosecute our business, confess our imbecility, and turn our eyes upon Him, whose mercy is over all his works, and who, though he humbles our pride, will succour our necessities.

Works of absolute necessity, are few and simple; a very great part of human diligence is laid out in accommodations of ease, or refinements of pleasure; and the farther we pass beyond the boundaries of necessity, the more we lose ourselves in the regions of vanity, and the more we expose ourselves to vexation of spirit. As we extend our pleasures, we multiply our wants. The pain of hunger is easily appeased, but to surmount the disgust of appetite vitiated by indulgence, all the arts of luxury are required, and all are often vain. When to the enjoyments of sense, are superadded the delights of fancy, we form a scheme of happiness that never can be complete, for we can always imagine more than we possess. All social pleasures put us more or less in the power of others, who sometimes cannot, and sometimes will not, please us. Conversations of argument often end in bitterness of controversy; and conversations of mirth, in petulance and folly. Friendship is violated by interest, or broken by passion, and benevolence finds its kindness bestowed on the worthless and ungrateful.

But most certain is the disappointment of him who places his happiness in comparative good, and considers, not what he himself wants, but what others have. The delight of eminence must, by its own nature, be rare; because he that is eminent must have many below him; and, therefore, if we suppose such desires general, as very general they are, the happiness of a few must arise from the misery of many. He that places his delight in the extent of his renown, is, in some degree, at the mercy of every tongue; not only malevolence, but indifference, may disturb him; and he may be pained, not only by

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those who speak ill, but by those likewise that say nothing.

As every engine of artificial motion, as it consists of more parts, is in more danger of deficience and disorder; so every effect, as it requires the agency of greater numbers, is more likely to fail. Yet what pleasure is granted to man, beyond the gross gratifications of sense, common to him with other animals, that does not demand the help of others, and the help of greater numbers, as the pleasure is sublimated and enlarged? And since such is the constitution of things, that whatever can give pleasure can likewise cause uneasiness, there is little hope that uneasiness will be long escaped. Of them whose offices are necessary to felicity, some will be perverse, and some will be unskilful; some will negligently withhold their contributions, and some will enviously withdraw them. The various and opposite directions of the human mind, which divide men into so many different occupations, keep all the inhabitants of the earth perpetually busy; but when it is considered, that the business of every man is to counteract the purpose of some other man, it will appear, that universal activity cannot contribute much to universal happiness. Of those that contend, one must necessarily be overcome, and he that prevails never has his labour rewarded to his wish; but finds that he has been contending for that which cannot satisfy, and engaged in a contest where even victory is vanity.

What then is the influence which the conviction of this unwelcome truth ought to have upon our conduct? It ought to teach us humility, patience, and diffidence. When we consider how little we know of the distant consequence of our own actions, how little the greatest personal qualities can protect us from misfortune, how much all our importance depends upon the favour of others, how uncertainly that favour is bestowed, and how easily it is lost; we shall find that we have very little reason to be proud. That which is most apt to elate the thoughts, height of place, and greatness of power, is the gift of

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others. No man can, by any natural or intrinsic faculties, maintain himself in a state of superiority; he is exalted to his place, whatever it be, by the concurrence of those who are, for a time, content to be counted his inferiours; he has no authority in himself; he is only able to control some, by the help of others. If dependence be a state of humiliation, every man has reason to be humble, for every man is dependent.

But however pleasing these considerations may be, however unequal our condition is to all our wishes or conceptions, we are not to admit impatience into our bosoms, or increase the evils of life, by vain throbs of discontent. To live in a world where all is vanity, has been decreed by our Creator to be the lot of man—a lot which we cannot alter by murmuring, but may soften by submission.

The consideration of the vanity of all human purposes and projects, deeply impressed upon the mind, necessarily produces that diffidence in all worldly good, which is necessary to the regulation of our passions, and the security of our innocence. In a smooth course of prosperity, an unobstructed progression from wish to wish, while the success of one design facilitates another, and the opening prospect of life shows pleasures at a distance; to conclude that the passage will be always clear, and that the delights which solicit from far, will, when they are attained, fill the soul with enjoyments, must necessarily produce violent desires, and eager pursuits, contempt of those that are behind, and malignity to those that are before. But the full persuasion that all earthly good is uncertain in the attainment, and unstable in the possession, and the frequent recollection of the slender supports on which we rest, and the dangers which are always hanging over us, will dictate inoffensive modesty, and mild benevolence. He does not rashly treat another with contempt, who doubts the duration of his own superiority: he will not refuse assistance to the distressed, who supposes that he may quickly need it himself. He that considers how imperfectly human wisdom can judge of

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that which has not been tried, will seldom think any possibilities of advantage worthy of vehement desire. As his hopes are moderate, his endeavours will be calm. He will not fix his fond hopes upon things which he knows to be vanity, but will enjoy this world as one who knows that he does not possess it: and that this is the disposition which becomes our condition, will appear when we consider,

THIRDLY: What consequences the serious and religious mind may draw from the position, that all is vanity.

When the present state of man is considered, when an estimate is made of his hopes, his pleasures, and his possessions; when his hopes appear to be deceitful, his labours ineffectual, his pleasures unsatisfactory, and his possessions fugitive, it is natural to wish for an abiding city, for a state more constant and permanent, of which the objects may be more proportioned to our wishes, and the enjoyments to our capacities; and from this wish it is reasonable to infer, that such a state is designed for us by that infinite Wisdom, which, as it does nothing in vain, has not created minds with comprehensions never to be filled. When revelation is consulted, it appears that such a state is really promised; and that, by the contempt of worldly pleasures, it is to be obtained. We then find, that instead of lamenting the imperfection of earthly things, we have reason to pour out thanks to Him who orders all for our good; that he has made the world, such as often deceives, and often afflicts us; that the charms of interest are not such as our frailty is unable to resist; but that we have such interruptions of our pursuits, and such langour in our enjoyments, such pains of body and anxiety of mind, as repress desire, and weaken temptation; and happy will it be if we follow the gracious directions of providence, and determine, that no degree of earthly felicity shall be purchased with a crime; if we resolve no longer to bear the chains of sin, to employ all our endeavours upon transitory and imperfect pleasures, or to divide our thoughts between the world and heaven; but to bid

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farewell to sublunary vanities, to endure no longer an unprofitable vexation of spirit; but with pure heart and steady faith to "fear God and to keep his commandments;" and remember that "this is the whole of man."

SERMON XIII.

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Tim. iii. 5, first part.

When St. Paul, in the precepts given to Timothy for his instruction how to regulate and purify the conversation of the first Christians, directed him to take care that those men should be avoided, as dangerous and pestilent, who, having the form of godliness, denied the power; it is reasonable to believe, that he meant, in his direct and immediate intention, to awaken his caution against gross hypocrites; such as may easily be supposed to have appeared too often in the most early seminaries of Christianity; who made an appearance of righteousness subservient to worldly interest; and whose conversion, real or pretended, gave them an opportunity of preying upon artless simplicity, by claiming that kindness which the first believers showed to one another; and obtaining benefactions which they did not want, and eating bread for which they did not labour.

To impostors of this kind, the peculiar state of the first Christians would naturally expose them. As they were surrounded by enemies, they were glad to find, in any man, the appearance of a friend; as they were wearied with importunate contradiction, they were desirous of an interval of respite, by consorting with any one that professed the same opinions; and what was still more favourable to such impostors, when they had, by embracing an unpopular and persecuted religion, divested them-

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selves, in a great degree, of secular interest, they were likely often to want that vigilance and suspicion which is forced, even upon honest minds, by much converse with the world, and frequent transactions with various characters; and which our divine Master teaches us to practise, when he commands us to join the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. The first Christians must have been, in the highest degree, zealous to strengthen their faith in themselves, and propagate it in others; and zeal easily spreads the arms, and opens the bosom to an adherent, or a proselyte, as to one, that adds another suffrage to truth, and strengthens the support of a good cause. Men of this disposition, and in this state of life, would easily be enamoured of the form of godliness, and not soon discover that the power was wanting. Men naturally think others like themselves, and, therefore, a good man is easily persuaded to credit the appearance of virtue.

Hypocrisy, however, was not confined to the apostolick ages. All times, and all places, have produced men, that have endeavoured to gain credit by false pretensions to excellence, and have recommended themselves to kindness or esteem, by specious professions, and ostentatious displays of counterfeited virtues.—It is, however, less necessary now to obviate this kind of fraud, by exhortations to caution; for that simplicity, which lay open to its operation, is not now very frequently to be found. The hypocrite, in these times, seldom boasts of much success. He is for the most part soon discovered; and when he is once known, the world will not wait for counsel to avoid him, for the good detest, and the bad despise him. He is hated for his attempts, and scorned for his miscarriage.

It may, therefore, be proper to consider the danger of a form of righteousness without the power, in a different and secondary sense, and to examine whether, as there are some who, by this form, deceive others, there are not some, likewise, that deceive themselves; who pacify their

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consciences with an appearance of piety, and live and die in dangerous tranquillity and delusive confidence.

In this inquiry it will be proper to consider,

FIRST: What may be understood by the form of godliness, as distinct from the power.

SECONDLY: What is the power of godliness, without which the form is defective and unavailing.

THIRDLY: How far it is necessary to the Christian life, that the form and power should subsist together.

Let it, therefore, be first considered, what may be easily and naturally understood by the form of godliness as distinct from the power.

By the force of godliness, may be properly understood, not only a specious practice of religious duties, exhibited to public notice, but all external acts of worship, all rites and ceremonies, all stated observances, and all compliance with temporary and local injunctions and regularities.

The religion of the Jews, from the time of Moses, comprised a great number of burdensome ceremonies, required by God for reasons which perhaps human wisdom has never fully discovered. Of these ceremonies, however, some were typically representative of the Christian institution, and some, by keeping them distinct, by dissimilitude of customs from the nations that surrounded them, had a tendency to secure them from the influence of ill example, and preserve them from the contagion of idolatry.

To the use of observances, thus important, they were confined by the strongest obligations. They were, indeed, external acts, but they were instituted by Divine authority; they were not to be considered merely as instrumental and expedient, as means which might be omitted, if their ends were secured: they were positively enjoined by the supreme Legislator, and were not left to choice, or discretion, or secular laws; to the will of the powerful, or the judgment of the prudent.

Yet even these sacred rites might be punctually performed, without making the performer acceptable to God; the blood of bulls and of goats might be poured out in

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vain, if the desires were not regulated, or the passions subdued. The sacrifices of the oppressour, or extortioner, were not an atonement, but an abomination. Forgiveness was obtained, not by incense, but by repentance; the offender was required to rend his heart, and not his garment; a contrite and a broken heart was the oblation which the supreme Judge did not despise.

So much was the moral law exalted above all ceremonial institutions, even in that dispensation by which so many ceremonies were commanded, that those two parts of duty were distinguished by the appellations of body and spirit. As the body, separated from the spirit, is a mass, lifeless, motionless, and useless; so the external practice of ritual observances was ineffectual and vain, an action without a meaning, a labour by which nothing was produced. As the spirit puts the limbs into motion, and directs their action to an end, so justice and mercy gave energy to ceremonies, made the oblation grateful, and the worshipper accepted.

The professors of Christianity have few ceremonies indispensably enjoined them. Their religion teaches them to worship God, not with local or temporary ceremonies, but in spirit and in truth; that is, with internal purity, and moral righteousness. For spirit, in this sense, seems to be opposed to the body of external rites, and truth is known to signify, in the biblical language, the sum of those duties which we owe to one another.

Yet such are the temptations of interest, and pleasure, and so prevalent is the desire of enjoying at once the pleasures of sin for a season, and the hopes of happiness to eternity; that even the Christian religion has been depraved by artificial modes of piety, and succedaneous practices of reconciliation. Men have been ever persuaded, that by doing something, to which they think themselves not obliged, they may purchase an exemption from such duties as they find themselves inclined to violate: that they may commute with heaven for a temporal fine, and make rigour atone for relaxity.

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In ages and countries, in which ignorance has produced and nourished superstition, many artifices have been invented, of practising piety without virtue, and repentance without amendment. The devotion of our blind forefathers consisted, for a great part, in rigorous austerities, laborious pilgrimages, and gloomy retirement; and that which now prevails, in the darker provinces of the popish world, exhausts its power in absurd veneration for some particular saint, expressed too often by honours paid to his image, or in a stated number of prayers, uttered with very little attention, and very frequently with little understanding.

Some of these practices may be, perhaps, justly imputed to the grossness of a people, scarcely capable of worship purely intellectual; to the necessity of complying with the weakness of men who must be taught their duty by material images, and sensible impressions. This plea, however, will avail but little, in defence of abuses not only permitted, but encouraged by pertinacious vindications, and fictitious miracles.

It is apparent that the Romish clergy have attributed too much efficacy to pious donations, and charitable establishments; and that they have made liberality to the church, and bounty to the poor, equivalent to the whole system of our duty to God, and to our neighbour.

Yet nothing can be more repugnant to the general tenour of the evangelical revelation, than an opinion that pardon may be bought, and guilt effaced, by a stipulated expiation. We naturally catch the pleasures of the present hour, and gratify the calls of the reigning passion: and what shall hinder the man of violence from outrage and mischief, or restrain the pursuer of interest from fraud and circumvention, when they are told, that after a life passed in disturbing the peace of life, and violating the security of possession, they may die at last in peace, by founding an alms-house, without the agonies of deep contrition?

But errour and corruption are often to be found where

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there are neither Jews nor Papists. Let us not look upon the depravity of others with triumph, nor censure it with bitterness. Every sect may find, in its own followers, those who have the form of godliness without the power; every man, if he examines his own conduct without intention to be his own flatterer, may, to a certain degree, find it in himself.

To give the heart to God, and to give the whole heart, is very difficult; the last, the great effort of long labour, fervent prayer, and diligent meditation. Many resolutions are made, and many relapses lamented, and many conflicts with our own desires, with the powers of the world, and the powers of darkness, must be sustained, before the will of man is made wholly obedient to the will of God.

In the mean time, we are willing to find some way to heaven, less difficult and less obstructed, to keep our hopes alive by faint endeavours, and to lull our consciences by such expedients as we may easily practise. Not yet resolved to live wholly to God, and yet afraid to live wholly to the world, we do something in recompense for that which we neglect, and resign something that we may keep the rest.

To be strictly religious, is difficult; but we may be zealously religious at little expense. By expressing on all occasions our detestation of heresy and popery, and all other horrours, we erect ourselves into champions for truth, without much hazard or trouble. The hopes of zeal are not wholly groundless. Indifference in questions of importance is no amiable quality. He that is warm for truth, and fearless in its defence, performs one of the duties of a good man; he strengthens his own conviction, and guards others from delusion; but steadiness of belief, and boldness of profession, are yet only part of the form of godliness, which may be attained by those who deny the power.

As almost every man is, by nature or by accident, exposed to danger from particular temptations, and disposed to some vices more than to others; so all are, either by

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disposition of mind, or the circumstances of life, inclined or compelled to some laudable practices. Of this happy tendency it is common to take advantage, by pushing the favourite, or the convenient virtue, to its utmost extent, and to lose all sense of deficiency in the perpetual contemplation of some single excellence.

Thus some please themselves with a constant regularity of life, and decency of behaviour,—they hear themselves commended, and superadd their own approbation. They know, or might know, that they have secret faults; but, as they are not open to accusation, they are not inquisitive to their own disquiet; they are satisfied that they do not corrupt others, and that the world will not be worse by their example.

Some are punctual in the attendance on public worship, and perhaps in the performance of private devotion. These they know to be great duties, and resolve not to neglect them. It is right they go so far; and with so much that is right they are satisfied. They are diligent in adoration, but defective in obedience.

Such men are often not hypocrites; the virtues which they practise arise from their principles. The man of regularity really hopes that he shall recommend goodness to those that know him. The frequenter of the church really hopes to propitiate his Creator. Their religion is sincere; what is reprehensible is, that it is partial, that the heart is yet not purified, and that yet many inordinate desires remain, not only unsubdued, but unsuspected, under the splendid cover of some specious practice, with which the mind delights itself too much, to take a rigorous survey of its own motions.

In condemnation of those who presume to hope that the performance of one duty will obtain excuse for the violation of others, it is affirmed by St. James, that he who breaks one commandment is guilty of all; and he defends his position by observing, that they are all delivered by the same authority.

His meaning is not, that all crimes are equal, or that in

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any one crime all others are involved; but that the law of God is to be obeyed with complete and unreserved submission; and that he who violates any of its ordinances, will not be justified by his observation of all the rest; since, as the whole is of Divine authority, every breach, wilful and unrepented, is an act of rebellion against Omnipotence.

One of the artifices, by which men, thus defectively religious, deceive themselves, is that of comparing their own behaviour with that of men openly vitious, and generally negligent; and inferring that themselves are good, because they suppose that they see others worse. The account of the Pharisee and Publican may show us that, in rating our own merit, we are in danger of mistake. But, though the estimate should be right, it is still to be remembered, that he who is not worst, may yet fall far below what will be required. Our rule of duty is not the virtue of men, but the law of God, from which alone we can learn what will be required.

SECONDLY: What is that power of godliness without which the form is defective and unavailing.

The power of godliness is contained in the love of God and of our neighbour; in that sum of religion, in which, as we are told by the Saviour of the world, the law and the prophets are comprised. The love of God will engage us to trust in his protection, to acquiesce in his dispensations, to keep his laws, to meditate on his perfection, and to declare our confidence and submission, by profound and frequent adoration; to impress his glory on our minds by songs of praise, to inflame our gratitude by acts of thanksgiving, to strengthen our faith, and exalt our hope, by pious meditations; and to implore his protection of our imbecility, and his assistance of our frailty, by humble supplication: and when we love God with the whole heart, the power of godliness will be shown by steadiness in temptation, by patience in affliction, by faith in the Divine promises, by perpetual dread of sin, by continual aspirations after higher degrees of holiness, and contempt

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of the pains and pleasures of the world, when they obstruct the progress of religious excellence.

The power of godliness, as it is exerted in the love of our neighbour, appears in the exact and punctual discharge of all the relative and social duties. He whom this power actuates and directs, will regulate his conduct, so as neither to do injury, nor willingly to give offence. He will neither be a tyrannical governour, nor a seditious subject; neither a cruel parent, nor a disobedient son; neither an oppressive master, nor an eye-servant. But he will not stop at negative goodness, nor rest in the mere forbearance of evil; he will search out occasions of beneficence, and extend his care to those who have no other claim to his attention than the great community of relation to the universal Father of mankind. To enumerate the various modes of charity, which true godliness may suggest, as it is difficult, would be useless. They are as extensive as want, and as various as misery.

We must, however, remember that where the form of godliness appears, we must not always suppose the power to be wanting, because its influence is not universal and complete; nor think every thing to be avoided, in whom we discover either defective virtues, or actual faults. The power subsists in him who is contending with corruption, though he has not yet entirely subdued it. He who falleth seven times a day may yet, by the mercy of God, be numbered among the just; the purest human virtue has much feculence. The highest flights of the soul soar not beyond the clouds and vapours of the earth; the greatest attainments are very imperfect; and he who is most advanced in excellence was once in a lower state, and in that lower state was yet worthy of love and reverence. One instance of the power of godliness is, readiness to help the weak, and comfort the fallen, to look with compassion upon the frail, to rekindle those whose ardour is cooling, and to recall those who, by inadvertency, or under the influence of strong temptation,

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have wandered from the right way; and to favour all them who mean well, and wish to be better, though their meaning and their wishes have not yet fully reformed their lives.

There is likewise danger lest, in the pursuit of the power of godliness, too little regard be paid to the form, and lest the censure of hypocrisy be too hastily passed, and a life apparently regular and serious be considered as an artifice to conceal bad purposes and secret views.

That this opinion, which some are very willing to indulge, may not prevail so as to discountenance the profession of piety, we are to consider,

THIRDLY: How far it is necessary to the Christian life, that the form and power of godliness should subsist together.

It may be with great reason affirmed, that though there may be the appearance of godliness without the reality, there can hardly be the reality without the appearance. Part of the duties of a Christian are necessarily publick. We are to worship God in the congregation; we are to make open profession of our hope and faith. One of the great duties of man, as a social being, is, to let his light shine before men, to instruct by the prevalence of his example, and, as far as his influence extends, to propagate goodness and enforce truth. No man is to boast of his own excellence, for this reason among others; the arrogance will make excellence less amiable, and less attractive of imitation. No man is to conceal the reverence of religion, or his zeal for truth and right; because, by shrinking from the notice of mankind, he betrays diffidence of the cause which he wishes to maintain. He, whose piety begins and ends in zeal for opinions, and in clamour against those who differ from him, is certainly yet without the vital energy of religion; but, if his opinions regulate his conduct, he may with great justice show his fervour, having already shown his sincerity. He that worships God in publick, and offends him by secret vices, if

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he means to make the good part of his conduct balance the bad, is to be censured and instructed; if he means to gain the applause of men, and to make outward sanctity an instrument of mischief, he is to be detested and avoided; but he that really endeavours to obey God in secret, neglects part of his duty, if he omits the solemnities of publick worship. The form of godliness, as it consists in the rites of religion, is the instrument given us by God for the acquisition of the power; the means as well as the end are prescribed; nor can he expect the help of grace, or the Divine approbation, who seeks them by any other method than that which infinite Wisdom has condescended to appoint.

SERMON XIV.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." ISAIAH xxvi. 3.

IN order to the explication of this text, or the enforcement of the precept implied in it, there seems to be no necessity, either of proving, that all men are desirous of happiness, or that their desire, for the most part, fails of being gratified. Every man is conscious, that he neither performs, nor forbears any thing upon any other motive than the prospect, either of an immediate gratification, or a distant reward; that whether he complies with temptation, or repels it, he is still influenced by the same general regard to his own felicity: but that when he yields to the solicitation of his appetite, or the impulse of his passions, he is overborn by the prevalence of the object before him; and when he adheres to his duty, in opposition to his present interest, he is influenced by the hopes of future happiness.

That almost every man is disappointed in his search

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after happiness, is apparent from the clamorous complaints which are always to be heard; from the restless discontent, which is hourly to be observed; and from the incessant pursuit of new objects, which employ almost every moment of every man's life. For a desire of change is a sufficient proof, that we are dissatisfied with our present state; and evidently shows, that we feel some pain which we desire to avoid, or miss some enjoyment which we wish to possess.

The true cause of this general disgust, an unprejudiced and attentive survey of the world will not long fail of discovering. It will easily appear, that men fail to gain what they so much desire, because they seek it where it is not to be found, because they suffer themselves to be dazzled by specious appearances, resign themselves up to the direction of their passions, and, when one pursuit has failed of affording them that satisfaction which they expected from it, apply themselves with the same ardour to another equally unprofitable, and waste their lives in successive delusions, in idle schemes of imaginary enjoyment; in the chase of shadows which fleet before them, and in attempts to grasp a bubble, which, however it may attract the eye by the brightness of its colour, is neither solid nor lasting, but owes its beauty only to its distance, and is no sooner touched than it disappears.

As men differ in age or disposition, they are exposed to different delusions in this important inquiry. The young and the gay imagine happiness to consist in show, in merriment and noise, or in a constant succession of amusements, or in the gratification of their appetites, and the frequent repetition of sensual pleasures. Instead of founding happiness on the solid basis of reason and reflection, they raise an airy fabrick of momentary satisfaction, which is perpetually decaying, and perpetually to be repaired. They pleased themselves, not with thinking justly, but with avoiding to think at all, with a suspense of all the operations of their intellectual faculties, which defends them from remembrance of the past, or anticipa-

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tion of the future. They lull themselves in an enervate and cowardly dissipation, and, instead of being happy, are only indolent.

That this state is not a state of happiness, that it affords no real satisfaction to a reasonable mind, those who appear most engaged in it will, in their calmest moments, readily confess. Those among them, on whom providence has bestowed such abilities as are necessary to the discovery of truth, and the distinction of appearance from reality (for, among the negligent and voluptuous, men of this character are sometimes to be found,) have always owned, that their felicity is like that of a deep sleep, from which they awake to care and sorrow; or of a pleasing dream, that affords them short gratifications, of which the day deprives them; and that their pleasures only differ from the phantoms of the night in this, that they leave behind them the pangs of guilt, with the vexation of disappointment.

It may be imagined, that reasonable beings must quickly discover how little such satisfactions are adapted to their nature, and how necessary it is to change their measures, in order to the attainment of that happiness which they desire; and in effect, it is generally found that few, except the young and unexperienced, content themselves with sensual gratifications; and that men, as they advance in years, and improve their judgment by observation, always confess, by the alteration of their conduct, that mere voluptuousness is not sufficient to fill the desires of the human mind.

They, therefore, shake off the lethargy of sloth, forsake diversion and amusements, and engage in the pursuits of riches or of honours. They employ those hours, which were frequently suffered to pass away unnumbered and unheeded, with the most solicitous application, and the most vigilant attention. They are no longer negligent of all that passes about them, no more careless of the opinions of mankind, or unconcerned with regard to censure or applause. They become anxious lest any opportunity

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should be lost of improving their fortunes, and lest they should give any occasion to reports which may injure their reputation, and obstruct their advancement. They constrain their words, their actions, and their looks, to obtain popularity, because they consider popularity as necessary to grandeur, and grandeur as the foundation of happiness.

But a very short experience teaches, what might indeed have been without the trial discovered by reflection, that perfect peace, that peace which is so much desired, is not to be found in wealth and greatness. He that succeeds in his first attempts is animated to new designs; new designs produce new anxieties and new opposition; and, though the second attempt should be equally happy, it will be found, as soon as the transports of novelty have ceased, as soon as custom has made elevation familiar, that peace is yet to be sought, and that new measures must be taken for the attainment of that tranquillity, for which it is the nature of man to languish, and the want of which is ill supplied by hurry and confusion, by pomp and variety.

The same disposition which inclines any man to raise himself to a superiority over others, will naturally excite the same desires of greater elevation, while he sees any superiour to himself. There is, therefore, no hope that, by pursuing greatness, any man can be happy, or, at least, this happiness must be confined to one, because only one can be without a superiour; and that one must surely feel his enjoyments very frequently disturbed, when he remembers by how many the station which he possesses is envied and coveted; when he reflects, how easily his possessions may be taken from him, perhaps by the same arts by which he attained them; how quickly the affections of the people may, by artful representations of his conduct, be alienated from him; or how easily he may be destroyed by violence, and what numbers ambition or revenge may invite to destroy him.

There is at least one consideration, which must imbitter

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the life of him, who places his happiness in his present state; a consideration that cannot be suppressed by any artful sophistries, which the appetites or the senses are always ready to suggest, and which it might be imagined not always possible to avoid in the most rapid whirl of pleasure, or the most incessant tumults of employment. As it is impossible for any man not to know, it may be well imagined difficult for him not to remember, that, however surrounded by his dependents, however caressed by his patrons, however applauded by his flatterers, or esteemed by his friends, he must one day die; that though he should have reason to imagine himself secured from any sudden diminution of his wealth, or any violent precipitation from his rank or power, yet they must soon be taken away by a force, not to be resisted or escaped. He cannot but sometimes think, when he surveys his acquisitions or counts his followers, "that this night his soul may be required of him," and that he had applauded himself for the attainment of that which he cannot hope to keep long, and which, if it could make him happy while he enjoys it, is yet of very little value, because the enjoyment must be very short.

The story of the great eastern monarch, who, when he surveyed his innumerable army from an eminence, wept at the reflection, that in less than a hundred years not one of all that multitude would remain, has been often mentioned; because the particular circumstances, in which that remark occurred, naturally claim the thought, and strike the imagination; but every man that places his happiness in external objects, may every day, with equal propriety, make the same observations. Though he does not lead armies, or govern kingdoms, he may reflect, whenever he finds his heart swelling with any present advantage, that he must, in a very short time, lose what he so much esteems, that in a year, a month, a day, or an hour, he may be struck out from the book of life, and placed in a state, where wealth or honour shall have no residence, and where all those distinctions shall be for

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ever obliterated, which now engross his thoughts, and exalt his pride.

This reflection will surely be sufficient to hinder that peace, which all terrestrial enjoyments can afford, from being perfect. It surely will soon disperse those meteors of happiness that glitter in the eyes only of the thoughtless and the supine, and awaken him to a serious and rational inquiry, where real happiness is to be found; by what means man, whom the great Creator cannot be supposed to have formed without the power of obtaining happiness, may set himself free from the shackles of anxiety with which he is encumbered, may throw off the load of terrour which oppresses him, and liberate himself from those horrours which the approach of death perpetually excites.

This he will immediately find only to be accomplished by securing to himself the protection of a Being mighty to save; a Being whose assistance may be extended equally to all parts of his duration, who can equally defend him in the time of danger, and of security; in the tumults of the day, and the privacy of the night; in the time of tribulation, and in a time frequently more fatal, the time of wealth; and in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. And when he has found the necessity of this sovereign Protector, and humbled himself with a due conviction of his own impotence, he may at last find the only comfort which this life can afford him, by remembering, that this great, this unbounded Being has informed us of the terms on which perfect peace is to be obtained, and has promised it to those whose mind is stayed on him.

Since, therefore, the pursuit of perfect peace is the great, the necessary, the inevitable, business of human life; since this peace is to be attained by trust in God, and by that only; since, without this, every state is miserable, and the voluptuous and the busy are equally disappointed; what can be more useful, than seriously to inquire,

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FIRST: What is meant by this trust in God, to which perfect peace is promised: and,

SECONDLY: By what means this trust in God is to be attained.

FIRST: Therefore, let us examine what is meant by this trust in God, to which perfect peace is promised.

Trust, when it is used on common occasions, implies a kind of resignation to the honesty, or abilities of another. Thus we trust a physician, when we obey his directions without knowing, or asking the particular reasons for the methods which he enjoins. Thus we trust a friend, when we commit our affairs to his management, without disturbing ourselves with any care concerning them. Thus we trust a patron, when we serve him with diligence, without any other certainty of a reward than what our confidence in his generosity affords us. These instances may give us some idea of that trust which we ought to repose in God; but an idea, in the utmost degree, gross and inadequate. Our trust in God ought to differ from every other trust, as infinity differs from an atom. It ought to transcend every other degree of confidence, as its object is exalted above every degree of created excellence.

But, in our present state, it is impossible to practise this, or any other duty, in perfection. We cannot trust God as we ought, because we cannot know him as we ought. We know, however, that he is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in goodness; that, therefore, he designs the happiness of all his creatures, that he cannot but know the proper means by which this end may be obtained, and that in the use of these means, as he cannot be mistaken, because he is omniscient, so he cannot be defeated, because he is almighty.

We know, therefore, that those whom he shall protect cannot be in danger; that neither the malice of wicked men, nor of wicked angels, can really injure them, but that persecution and danger shall only harass them for a

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time, and death set them free from disappointment and from pain. He, therefore, that trusts in God will no longer be distracted in his search after happiness, for he will find it in a firm belief, that whatever evils are suffered to befall him will finally contribute to his felicity; and that by staying his mind upon the Lord, he will be kept in peace.

But God has promised this protection, not indiscriminately to all, but to those only who endeavour to obtain it, by complying with the conditions which he has prescribed; nor is the perfect peace, which the confidence of Divine support confers, to be hoped for but by those who have obtained a well-grounded trust in him; and by the practice of his precepts, have stayed their minds upon him. It is, therefore, necessary to inquire,

SECONDLY: How this trust is to be attained.

That there is a fallacious and precipitate trust in God, a trust which, as it is not founded upon God's promises, will in the end be disappointed, we are informed by our Saviour himself: "Many will say unto me, in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? and then I will profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Those who contented themselves with believing, and professing Christianity, without obeying its precepts; those, who while they call the great Author of our faith their Lord, their Master, and their God, yet neglect his precepts and work iniquity, will be rejected by him at the last day, as those whom he has never known; those to whom his regard was never extended, and, notwithstanding the confidence with which they may claim his intercession, will not be distinguished, by any favour, from other sinners.

Trust in God, that trust to which perfect peace is promised, is to be obtained only by repentance, obedience, and supplication, not by nourishing in our own hearts a

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confused idea of the goodness of God, or a firm persuasion that we are in a state of grace; by which some have been deceived, as it may be feared, to their own destruction. We are not to imagine ourselves safe, only because we are harassed with those anxieties about our future state with which others are tormented, but which are so far from being proofs of reprobation, that though they are often mistaken by those that languish under them, they are more frequently evidences of piety, and a sincere and fervent desire of pleasing God. We are not to imagine, that God approves us because he does not afflict us, nor, on the other hand, to persuade ourselves too hastily that he afflicts us, because he loves us. We are, without expecting any extraordinary effusions of light, to examine our actions by the great and unchangeable rules of revelation and reason, "to do to others as we would they should do to us," and to love God with all our heart, and express that love by keeping his commandments.

He that hopes to find peace by trusting God, must obey him; and when he has at any time failed in his obedience, which amongst the best of men will be very frequent, he must endeavour to reconcile God to him by repentance. He may then find another occasion of exercising his trust, by assuring himself, that "when the wicked forsakes his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and returns unto the Lord, he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon."

This constant and devout practice is both the effect, and cause, of confidence in God. He will naturally pour out his supplications to the Supreme Being, who trusts in him for assistance and protection; and he, who, with proper fervour and humility, prostrates himself before God, will always rise with an increase of holy confidence. By meditating on his own weakness, he will hourly receive new conviction of the necessity of soliciting the favour of his Creator; and by recollecting his promises, will confirm himself in the hope of obtaining what he desires, and if, to secure these promises, he steadily practises the duties

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on which they depend, he will soon find his mind stayed on God, and be kept in perfect peace, because he trusteth in him.

SERMON XV.

"Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble," Job xiv. 1.

THE position contained in this sentence, neither requires, nor admits, proof or illustration; being too evident to be denied, and too clear to be mistaken. That life is of short continuance, and is disquieted by many molestations, every man knows, and every man feels; and the complaint, attributed to Job, in the history that is supposed to be the oldest book of which mankind is in possession, has been continued, and will be continued, through all human generations with endless repetitions.

But truth does not always operate in proportion to its reception. What has been always known, and very often said, as it impresses the mind with no new images, excites no attention, and is suffered to lie unheeded in the memory. Truth, possessed without labour of investigation, like many of the general conveniencies of life, loses its estimation by its easiness of access: nor is it always sufficiently remembered, that the most valuable things are those which are most plentifully bestowed.

To consider the shortness, or misery, of life, is not an employment to which the mind recurs for solace or diversion; or to which it is invited by any hope of immediate delight. It is one of those intellectual medicines, of which the nauseous essence often obstructs the benefit, and which the fastidiousness of nature prompts us to refuse. But we are told by Solomon, that there is "a time not only to laugh, but a time to weep;" and that it is good sometimes to enter into the house "of mourning."

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Many things which are not pleasant may be salutary; and among them is the just estimate of human life, which may be made by all with advantage, though by few, very few, with delight. As it is the business of a traveller to view the way before him, whatever dangers may threaten, or difficulties obstruct him, and however void may be the prospect of elegance or pleasure; it is our duty, in the pilgrimage of life, to proceed with our eyes open, and to see our state; not as hope or fancy may delineate it, but as it has been in reality appointed by Divine providence. From errours, to which, after most diligent examination, the frailty of our understandings may sometimes expose us, we may reasonably hope, that he, who knows whereof we are made, will suffer no irremediable evil to follow; but it would be unreasonable to expect, that the same indulgence shall be extended to voluntary ignorance; or, that we shall not suffer by those delusions to which we resign ourselves by idleness or choice.

Nothing but daily experience could make it credible, that we should see the daily descent into the grave of those whom we love or fear, admire or detest; that we should see one generation passed, another passing, see possessions daily changing their owners, and the world, at very short intervals, altering its appearance, and yet should want to be reminded that life is short; or that we should, wherever we turn our eyes, find misfortune and distress, and have our ears daily filled with lamentations of misery; that we should often feel pain and sickness, disappointments and privations, and yet, at every respiration of momentary ease, or gleam of fugitive and uncertain joy, be elated beyond the true sense of our condition, and need the voice of salutary admonition, to make us remember that life is miserable.

But since the mind is always of itself shrinking from disagreeable images, it is sometimes necessary to recal them; and it may contribute to the repression of many unreasonable desires, and the prevention of many faults and follies, if we frequently, and attentively consider,

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FIRST: That "man born of a woman is of few days." And,

SECONDLY: That "man born of a woman is full of trouble."

As this changeable and uncertain life is only the passage to an immutable state, and endless duration of happiness or misery; it ought never to be absent from our thoughts, that "man born of a woman is of few days."

The business of life is to work out our salvation; and the days are few in which provision must be made for eternity. We all stand upon the brink of the grave; of that state, in which there is no repentance. He, whose life is extended to its utmost natural boundaries, can live but a little while; and that he shall be one of those, who are comparatively said to live long, no man can tell. Our days are not only few, but uncertain. The utmost that can be hoped, is little; and of that little, the greater part is denied to the majority of mankind.

Our time is short, and our work is great: it is, therefore, with the kindest earnestness, enjoined by the apostle, that we use all diligence to make our "calling and election sure." But to an impartial surveyor of the ways of men, will it appear that the apostle's summons has been heard or regarded? Let the most candid and charitable observer take cognisance of the general practice of the world; and what can be discovered but gay thoughtlessness, or sordid industry? It seems that to secure their calling and election is the care of a few. Of the greater part it may be said, that God is not in their thoughts. One forgets him in his business, another in his amusements; one in eager enjoyment of to-day, another in solicitous contrivance for to-morrow. Some die amidst the gratifications of luxury, and some in the tumults of contests undecided, and purposes uncompleted. Warnings are multiplied, but without notice. "Wisdom crieth in the streets," but is rarely heard.

Among those that live thus wholly occupied by present things, there are some, in whom all sense of religion

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seems extinct or dormant; who acquiesce in their own modes of life, and never look forward into futurity, but gratify themselves within their own accustomed circle of amusements, or limit their thoughts by the attainment of their present pursuit; and, without suffering themselves to be interrupted by the unwelcome thoughts of death and judgment, congratulate themselves on their prudence or felicity, and rest satisfied with what the world can afford them; not that they doubt, but forget, a future state; not that they disbelieve their own immortality, but that they never consider it.

To these men it is surely proper to represent the shortness of life, and to remind them that human acquisitions and enjoyments are of few days; and that, whatever value may be assigned them by perverted opinions, they certainly want durability; that the fabrick of terrestrial happiness has no foundation that can long support it; that every hour, however enlivened by gaiety, or dignified by splendour, is a part subducted from the sum of life; that age advances alike upon the negligent and anxious; and that every moment of delight makes delight the shorter.

If reason forbids us to fix our hearts upon things which we are not certain of retaining, we violate a prohibition still stronger, when we suffer ourselves to place our happiness in that which must certainly be lost; yet such is all that this world affords us. Pleasures and honours must quickly perish, because life itself must soon be at an end.

But if it be folly to delight in advantages of uncertain tenure and short continuance, how great is the folly of preferring them to permanent and perpetual good! The man whose whole attention converges to this world, even if we suppose all his attempts prosperous, and all his wishes granted, gains only empty pleasure, which he cannot keep, at the cost of eternal happiness, which, if now neglected, he can never gain.

Let such men, therefore, seriously reflect, that "man

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born of a woman is of few days, that he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

Others there are on whom the interests of life have very strong hold, who relax their thoughts by pleasure, or enchain them by attention to wealth or power; and yet feel, with forcible conviction, the importance of futurity; in whose breasts pious intentions are often budding, though they are quickly nipped by secular desires. Such men suffer frequent disturbance from the remonstrances of reason, and the reproaches of conscience, and do not set reason and conscience at defiance, but endeavour to pacify them with assuasive promises of repentance and amendment. They know that their present state is dangerous, and, therefore, withdraw from it to a fancied futurity, in which whatever is crooked is to be made straight; in which temptations are to be rejected, and passions to be conquered: in which wisdom and piety are to regulate the day; in which every hour shall have its proper duty. The morning shall awake beneficence, and the evening still the soul in gratitude and devotion.

Purposes like these are often formed, and often forgotten. When remorse and solitude press hard upon the mind, they afford a temporary refuge, which, like other shelters from a storm, is forsaken, when the calm returns. The design of amendment is never dismissed, but it rests in the bosom without effect. The time convenient for so great a change of conduct is not yet come. There are hindrances which another year will remove; there are helps which some near event will supply. Day rises after day, and one year follows another, and produces nothing, but resolutions without effect, and self-reproach without reformation. The time destined for a new life lapses in silence; another time is fixed, and another lapses; but the same train of delusion still continues. He that sees his danger, doubts not his power of escaping it; and though he has deceived himself a thousand times, loses little of his own confidence. The indignation excited by

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the past will, he thinks, secure him from any future failure. He retires to confirm his thoughts by meditation, and feels sentiments of piety powerful within him. He ventures again into the stream of life, and finds himself again carried away by the current.

That to such men, the sense of their danger may not be useless; that they may no longer trifle with their own conviction; it is necessary to remind them, that "man is of few days;" that the life allotted to human beings is short, and, while they stand still in idle suspense, is growing always shorter; that as this little time is spent well or ill, their whole future existence will be happy, or miserable; that he who begins the great work of his salvation early, has employment adequate to all his powers; and that he who has delayed it, can hope to accomplish it only by delaying it no longer.

To him who turns his thoughts late to the duties of religion, the time is not only shorter, but the work is greater. The more sin has prevailed, with the more difficulty is its dominion resisted. Habits are formed by repeated acts, and therefore old habits are always strongest. The mode of life to which we have been accustomed, and which has entwined itself with all our thoughts and actions, is not quitted but with much difficulty. The want of those vanities which have hitherto filled the day, is not easily supplied. Accustomed pleasures rush upon the imagination; the passions clamour for their usual gratifications; and sin, though resolutely shaken off, will struggle to regain its former hold.

To overcome all these difficulties, and overcome they must be, who can tell what time will be sufficient! To disburden the conscience, to reclaim the desires, to combat sensuality, and repress vanity, is not the work of an hour, or of a day. Many conflicts must be endured, many falls recovered, and many temptations repelled. The arts of the enemy must be counteracted, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts detected, by steady and persevering vigilance.

But how much more dreadful does the danger of delay

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appear, when it is considered, that not only life is every day shorter, and the work of reformation every day greater, but that strength is every day less! It is not only comparatively lessened by the long continuance of bad habits, but, if the greater part of our time be past, it is absolutely less by natural decay. In the feebleness of declining life, resolution is apt to languish; and the pains, the sickness, and consequent infirmities of age, too frequently demand so much care for the body, that very little care is, or can be, taken for the soul.

One consideration more ought to be deeply impressed upon every sluggish and dilatory lingerer. The penitential sense of sin, and the desire of a new life, when they arise in the mind, are to be received as monitions excited by our merciful Father, as calls which it is our duty to hear, and our interest to follow; that to turn our thoughts away from them, is a new sin; a sin which, often repeated, may at last be punished by dereliction. He that has been called often in vain, may be called no more; and when death comes upon him, he will recollect his broken resolves with unutterable anguish; will wish for time to do what he has hitherto neglected, and lament in vain that his days are few.

The motives to religious vigilance, and diligence in our duties, which are afforded by serious meditation on the shortness of life, will receive assistance from the view of its misery; and we are, therefore, to remember,

SECONDLY: That "man born of a woman is full of trouble."

The immediate effect of the numerous calamities with which human nature is threatened, or afflicted, is to direct our desires to a better state. When we know, that we are on every side beset with dangers; that our condition admits many evils which cannot be remedied, but contains no good which cannot be taken from us; that pain lies in ambush behind pleasure, and misfortune behind success; that we have bodies subject to innumerable maladies, and minds liable to endless perturbations; that our knowledge

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often gives us pain, by presenting to our wishes such felicity as is beyond our reach, and our ignorance is such, that we often pursue, with eagerness, what either we cannot attain, or what, if we could attain it, disappoints our hopes; that in the dead calm of solitude we are insufficient to our own contentment, and that, when weariness of ourselves impels us to society, we are often ill received; when we perceive that small offences may raise enemies, but that great benefits will not always gain us friends; when we find ourselves courted by interest, and forsaken by ingratitude; when those who love us fall daily into the grave, and we see ourselves considered as aliens and strangers by the rising generation; it seems that we must by necessity turn our thoughts to another life, where, to those who are well prepared for their departure, there will no longer be pain or sorrow.

Of the troubles incident to mankind, every one is best acquainted with his own share. The miseries of others may attract, but his own force his attention; and as man is not afflicted but for good purposes, that attention, if well regulated, will contribute to purify his heart.

We are taught in the history of Adam's fall, that trouble was the consequence of sin, and that misery came into the world by disobedience to the Divine law. Sin and vexation are still so closely united, that he who traces his troubles to their source will commonly find that his faults have produced them; and he is then to consider his sufferings as the mild admonitions of his heavenly Father, by which he is summoned to timely penitence. He is so far from having any reason to repine, that he may draw comfortable hopes of pardon and acceptance, and may say, with the highest reason, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

It is, however, possible that trouble may, sometimes, be the consequence of virtue. In times of persecution this has often happened. Confessors of the truth have been punished by exile, imprisonment, tortures, and death. The faithful have been driven from place to place, and those

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"have wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, of whom the world was not worthy," Heb. xi. 37.

Of such violence, providence has now removed us from the danger; but it is still possible, that integrity may raise enemies, and that a resolute adherence to the right may not always be without danger. But evils of this kind bring their consolation with them; and their natural effect is to raise the eye and thoughts to Him who certainly judges right; and to excite ardent desires of that state, where innocence and happiness shall always be united.

When we have leisure from our own cares to cast our eyes about us, and behold the whole creation groaning in misery, we must be careful that our judgment is not presumptuous, and that our charity is not regulated by external appearances. We are not to consider those on whom evil falls, as the outcasts of providence; for though temporal prosperity was promised to the Jews, as a reward of faithful adherence to the worship of God, yet, under the dispensation of the gospel we are no where taught, that the good shall have any exemption from the common accidents of life, or that natural and civil evil shall not be equally shared by the righteous and the wicked.

The frequency of misfortunes, and universality of misery, may properly repress any tendency to discontent or murmur. We suffer only what is suffered by others, and often by those who are better than ourselves.

But the chief reason why we should send out our inquiries, to collect intelligence of misery, is, that we may find opportunities of doing good. Many human troubles are such as God has given man the power of alleviating. The wants of poverty may evidently be removed by the kindness of those who have more than their own use requires. Of such beneficence the time in which we live does not want examples; and surely that duty can never be neglected, to which so great rewards are so explicitly promised.

But the power of doing good is not confined to the wealthy. He that has nothing else to give, may often give

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advice. Wisdom has likewise benefits in its power. A wise man may reclaim the vitious, and instruct the ignorant, may quiet the throbs of sorrow, or disentangle the perplexities of conscience. He may compose the resentful, encourage the timorous, and animate the hopeless. In the multifarious afflictions with which every state of human life is acquainted, there is place for a thousand offices of tenderness; so that he, whose desire it is to do good, can never be long without an opportunity; and every opportunity that providence presents, let us seize with eagerness, and improve with diligence; remembering that we have no time to lose, for "man that is born of a woman is of few days."

SERMON XVI.

"In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." Job i. 22.

Such is the weakness of human nature, that every particular state, or condition, lies open to particular temptations. Different frames of constitution expose us to different passions, of equal danger to our virtue; and different methods of life, whether we engage in them by choice, or are forced upon them by necessity, have each of them their inlets to sin, and their avenues to perdition. The two opposite states of prosperity and adversity equally require our vigilance and caution; each of them is a state of conflict, in which nothing but unwearied resistance can preserve us from being overcome.

The vices of prosperity are well known, and generally observed. The haughtiness of high rank, the luxury of affluence, and the cruelty of power, every man remarks, and no man palliates. So that they are the common subjects of invective.

But though compassion hinders men from being equally severe upon the faults of the unhappy and distressed, yet,

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as there always has been, and always will be, at least an equal number in this, as in the other state, it is proper that they likewise should be warned of the crimes to which the circumstances of their condition expose them, and furnished with such reflections as may enable them to avoid them; that one misery may not produce a greater, nor misfortune be the cause of wickedness.

There is no crime more incident to those whose life is imbittered with calamities, and whom afflictions have reduced to gloom and melancholy, than that of repining at the determinations of providence, or of "charging God foolishly." They are often tempted to unseemly inquiries into the reasons of his dispensations, and to expostulations about the justice of that sentence which condemns them to their present sufferings. They consider the lives of those whom they account happier than themselves, with an eye of malice and suspicion, and if they find them no better than their own, think themselves almost justified in murmuring at their own state.

But how widely they err from their duty, by giving way to discontent, and allowing themselves to dispute the reasonableness of those laws by which the great Creator governs the world, will appear,

FIRST: By considering the attributes of God. And,

SECONDLY: By reflecting on the ignorance of man.

FIRST: By considering the attributes of God.

Many of the errours of mankind, both in opinion and practice, seem to arise originally from mistaken notions of the Divine Being, or at least from want of attention to the nature of those attributes which reason, as well as the Holy Scriptures, teaches us to assign to him. A temporary forgetfulness has, for the time, the same effect as real ignorance, but has this advantage, that it is much more easily remedied; since it is much less difficult to recollect our own ideas, than to obtain new ones. This is, I suppose, the state of every man amongst us, who is betrayed by his impatience under afflictions to murmur at Heaven. He knows, when he reflects calmly, that the world is

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neither eternal, nor independent; that we neither were produced, nor are preserved by chance. But that heaven and earth, and the whole system of things, were created by an infinite and perfect Being, who still continues to superintend and govern them. He knows that this great Being is infinitely wise, and infinitely good; so that the end which he proposes must necessarily be the final happiness of those beings that depend upon him, and the means, by which he promotes that end, must undoubtedly be the wisest and the best. All this he is sufficiently convinced of, when he is awakened to recollection; but his conviction is overborne by the sudden gusts of passion, and his impatience hurries him to wicked exclamations, before he can recall to his mind those reasonings, which, if attended to, would stifle every rebellious thought, and change his distrust and discontent into confidence and tranquillity.

It very nearly concerns every man, since every man is exposed, by the nature of human things, to trouble and calamities, to provide against the days of adversity, by making such ideas familiar to his mind as may defend him against any temptations to the sin of "charging God foolishly."

It is frequently observed in common life, that some favourite notion or inclination, long indulged, takes such an entire possession of a man's mind, and so engrosses his faculties, as to mingle thoughts perhaps he is not himself conscious of with almost all his conceptions, and influence his whole behaviour. It will often operate on occasions with which it could scarcely be imagined to have any connexion, and will discover itself, however it may lie concealed, either in trifling incidents, or important occurrences, when it is least expected or foreseen. It gives a particular direction to every sentiment and action, and carries a man forward, as by a kind of resistless impulse, or insuperable destiny.

As this unbounded dominion of ideas, long entertained by the fancy, and naturalized to the mind, is a very strong

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argument against suffering ourselves to dwell too long upon pleasing dreams, or delightful falsehoods, or admitting any inordinate passion to insinuate itself, and grow domestick; so it is a reason, of equal force, to engage us in a frequent and intense meditation on those important and eternal rules, which are to regulate our conduct, and rectify our minds; that the power of habit may be added to that of truth, that the most useful ideas may be the most familiar, and that every action of our lives may be carried on under the superintendence of an overruling piety.

The man who has accustomed himself to consider that he is always in the presence of the Supreme Being, that every work of his hands is carried on, and every imagination of his heart formed, under the inspection of his Creator, and his Judge, easily withstands those temptations which find a ready passage into a mind not guarded and secured by this awful sense of the Divine presence.

He is not enticed by ill examples, because the purity of God always occurs to his imagination; he is not betrayed to security by solitude, because he never considers himself as alone.

The two great attributes of our Sovereign Creator, which seem most likely to influence our lives, and, by consequence, most necessarily to claim our attention, are his justice and his mercy. Each of these may suggest considerations, very efficacious for the suppression of wicked and unreasonable murmurs.

The justice of God will not suffer him to afflict any man, without cause, or without retribution. Whenever we suffer, therefore, we are certain, either that we have, by our wickedness, procured our own miseries, or that they are sent upon us as further trials of our virtue, in order to prepare us for greater degrees of happiness. Whether we suppose ourselves to suffer for the sake of punishment or probation, it is not easy to discover with what right we repine.

If our pains and labours be only preparatory to un-

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bounded felicity; if we are "persecuted for righteousness sake," or suffer by any consequences of a good life; we ought to "rejoice and be exceeding glad," and to glorify the goodness of God, who, by uniting us in our sufferings with saints and martyrs, will join us also in our reward.

But it is not uncharitable to believe of others, that this is not always the reason of their sufferings, and certainly no man ought to believe it of himself, without a very severe and cautious examination, long continued, and often repeated; for nothing is more dangerous than spiritual pride. The man that esteems himself a saint will be in danger of relaxing his circumspection, of stopping in his progress of virtue, and, if once he stops, of falling back into those infirmities from which his imaginary exemption made him presumptuous and supine. Every man, therefore, when the hand of God is heavy upon him, must apply himself to an attentive, and exact retrospection of his own life. He must inquire, if he has avoided all open enormities, and scandalous degrees of guilt; whether he is not punished for some secret crime unknown to the world, and, perhaps, almost forgotten by himself; whether, in surveying himself, he does not overlook some favourite sin, some criminal indulgence; or whether he has not satisfied himself with increasing his devotions, instead of reforming his morals, or whether, from too much confidence in his morality, he has not been too negligent of his devotions; and whether he has not contented himself with an imperfect and partial satisfaction for some injury done to his neighbour, when an adequate and complete reparation was in his power.

To this inquiry he will be incited by remembering that God is just, that there is undoubtedly a reason for his misery, which will probably be found in his own corruption. He will, therefore, instead of murmuring at God, begin to examine himself; and when he has found the depravity of his own manners, it is more likely that he will admire the mercy, than complain of the severity, of his Judge.

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We have, indeed, so little right to complain of punishment, when it does not exceed the measure of the offence, that to bear it patiently hardly deserves the name of virtue; but impatience under it is, in a high degree, foolish and criminal.

It is well known how partial every man is in his own cause, and therefore it is necessary to meditate much upon the justice of God, lest we be tempted to think our punishments too great for our faults; and, in the midst of our anguish and distress, "charge God foolishly."

But we shall receive yet further satisfaction from a frequent reflection on the mercy of God. We shall learn to consider him, not only as the Governour, but as the Father, of the universe; as a Being infinitely gracious, whose punishments are not inflicted to gratify any passion of anger, or revenge, but to awaken us from the lethargy of sin, and to recall us from the paths of destruction.

Every man has observed, that the greatest part of those who enjoy the pleasures of this life, without interruption or restraint, are either entirely forgetful of any other state, or at least very little solicitous about it. Men are easily intoxicated with pleasure, dazzled with magnificence, or elated with power. The most pathetick or rational discourse upon eternity has seldom any lasting effect upon the gay, the young, the wealthy, and the prosperous. Even the gospel itself was first received by the poor.

The reason of this is not, because religion is best adapted to a gloomy and melancholy state of mind. For the truths of religion are attested by evidence, which must be yielded to as soon as it is considered; and confirmed by proofs, which nothing but inattention can resist. But to consider, and weigh this evidence seriously and impartially, the mind must be abstracted, in some measure, from the objects that surround us; objects that strike us strongly, not because they are great, but because they are near; while the views of futurity affect us but faintly, not because they are unimportant, but because they are distant.

A constant conviction of the mercy of God, firmly im-

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planted in our minds, will, upon the first attack of any calamity, easily induce us to reflect, that it is permitted by God to fall upon us, lest we should be too much enamoured of our present state, and neglect to extend our prospects into eternity.

Thus, by familiarizing to our minds the attributes of God, shall we, in a great measure, secure ourselves against any temptation to repine at his arrangements; but shall probably still more strengthen our resolution, and confirm our piety, by reflecting,

SECONDLY: On the ignorance of man.

One general method of judging, and determining upon the value, or excellence of things, is by comparing one with another. Thus it is, that we form a notion of wealth, greatness, or power. It is by comparing ourselves with others, that we often make an estimate of our own happiness, and even sometimes of our virtue. They who repine at the ways of providence, repine often, not because they are miserable, but because they are not so happy as others; and imagine their afflictions dealt with a partial hand, not that they can conceive themselves free from guilt, but because they see, or think they see, others equally criminal, that suffer less. Should they be supposed to judge rightly of themselves and others, should it be conceived that, in rating their own excellencies, they are not misled by their self-love, or that they are not hindered by envy from discerning the virtues of those whom they look upon as rivals for happiness; yet unless they could prove, that the mercies which they have received are below their merits, they have no reason to complain. He that has more than he deserves, is not to murmur merely because he has less than another.

But when we judge thus confidently of others, we deceive ourselves; we admit conjectures for certainties, and chimeras for realities. To determine the degrees of virtue and wickedness in particular men, is the prerogative only of that Being that searches the secrets of the heart, that knows what temptations each man has resisted;

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how far the means of grace have been afforded him, and how he has improved or neglected them; that sees the force of every passion, knows the power of every prejudice, attends to every conflict of the mind, and marks all the struggles of imperfect virtue. He only, who gave us our faculties and abilities, knows when we err by insurmountable ignorance, or when we deviate from the right by negligence or presumption. He only, that knows every circumstance of life, and every motion of the mind, can tell how far the crimes, or virtues, of each man are to be punished or rewarded. No man can say that he is better than another, because no man can tell how far the other was enabled to resist temptation, or what incidents might concur to overthrow his virtue. Nor are we able to decide, with much greater certainty, upon the happiness of others. We see only the superficies of men, without knowing what passes within. Splendour, equipage, and luxury, are not always accompanied by happiness; but are more frequently the wretched solaces of a mind distracted with perplexities, and harassed with terrours. Men are often driven, by reflection and remorse, into the hurries of business, or of pleasure, and fly from the terrifying suggestions of their own thoughts to banquets and to courts.

Prosperity and happiness are very different, though by those who undertake to judge of the state of others they are always confounded. It is possible to know that another is prosperous, that his revenues increase, that his dependents grow more numerous, that his schemes succeed, and his reputation advances. But we cannot tell how much all these promote his happiness, because we cannot judge how much they may engage his care, or inflame his desires; how much he may fear his enemies, or suspect his friends. We know not how much this seeming felicity may be impaired by his folly, or his guilt; and, therefore, he that murmurs at the inequality of human happiness, or accuses providence of partiality, forgets his own imperfections, and determines rashly where he cannot judge.

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Let every one then whom God shall visit with affliction, humble himself before him, with steady confidence in his mercy, and unfeigned submission to his justice! Let him remember that his sins are the cause of his miseries, that his troubles are sent to awaken him to reflection, and that the evils of this life may be improved to his eternal advantage, if, instead of adding sin to sin, and charging God foolishly, he applies himself seriously to the great work of self-examination and repentance.

For surely the frailty of this life, and the uncertainty of all human happiness, is proved by every view of the world about us, and every reflection upon ourselves. Let not death arrest us in a state of mind unfit to stand the trial of eternal justice, or to obtain the privileges of infinite mercy! Let it not surprise us engaged in schemes of vanity, or wishes of empty pleasure! Let death, which may seize us now, which will seize us at some time, equally terrible, find us, whenever it shall come, animated with the love of God, submissive to his eternal will, and diffused in universal charity and benevolence to our brethren.

Let this instant begin a new life! and every future minute improve it! Then, in exchange for riches, honours, or sensual delights, we may obtain the tranquillity of a good conscience, and that "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

SERMON XVII.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." EXODUS xx. 16.

NOTHING is more common than for men to make partial and absurd distinctions between vices of equal enormity,

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and to observe some of the Divine commands with great scrupulousness; while they violate others equally important, without any concern, or the least apparent consciousness of guilt.

That to do our duty in part is better than entirely to disregard it, cannot be denied; and he that avoids some crimes, from the fear of displeasing God, is doubtless far more innocent than he that has thrown off all restraint, has forgotten the distinctions of good and evil, and complies with every temptation. But it is a very dangerous mistake, to conceive that any man, by obeying one law, acquires the liberty of breaking another; or that all sins, equally odious to God, or hurtful to men, are not, with equal care, to be avoided.

We may frequently observe, that men, who would abhor the thought of violating the property of another, by direct methods of oppression or rapine; men, on all common occasions, not only just, but kind and compassionate, willing to relieve the necessitous, and active in the protection of the injured; will, nevertheless, invade the characters of others with defamation and calumny, and destroy a reputation without remorse.

If every day did not convince us how little either good or bad men are consistent with themselves, it might be wondered, how men, who own their obligations to the practice of some duties, can overlook in themselves the omission of others equally important, and enjoined by the same authority; and that those who avoid theft, because they are forbidden to steal, do not equally abstain from calumny, since they are no less forbidden to "bear false witness against their neighbour;" a prohibition, of which I shall endeavour to explain the nature, and enforce the necessity, by showing,

FIRST: What are the different senses, in which a man may be said to "bear false witness against his neighbour."

SECONDLY: The enormity of the sin of "bearing false witness."

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THIRDLY: What reflections may best enable us to avoid it.

The highest degree of guilt forbidden by this law of God, is false testimony in a literal sense, or deliberate and solemn perjury in a court of justice, by which the life of an innocent man is taken away, the rightful owner stripped of his possessions, or an oppressour supported in his usurpations. This is a crime that includes robbery and murder, sublimed to the highest state of enormity, and heightened with the most atrocious aggravations. He that robs or murders by this method, not only does it, by the nature of the action, with calmness and premeditation, but by making the name of God a sanction to his wickedness. Upon this it is unnecessary to dwell long, since men, arrived at this height of corruption, are scarcely to be reformed by argument, or persuasion; and indeed seldom suffer themselves to be reasoned with or admonished. It may be, however, proper to observe, that he who is ever so remotely the cause of any wickedness, if he really designs, and willingly promotes it, is guilty of that action in the same, or nearly the same, degree with the immediate perpetrator; and, therefore, he that suborns a false witness, or procures such a one to be suborned, whether in his own cause, or in that of another, is guilty of the crime of perjury in its utmost extent.

Nor is that man only perjured, who delivers for truth what he certainly knows to be false; but he likewise that asserts what he does not know to be true. For as an oath taken implies, in the opinion of the magistrate who administers it, a knowledge of the fact required to be proved, he that, by offering himself an evidence, declares himself acquainted with what he is ignorant of, is guilty of bearing false witness, since, though what he swears should happen to be true, it is not true that he knew it.

Such remarks as these seem, at the first view, very trifling, because they are obvious, and yet are made necessary by the conduct of mankind. Every man almost has

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had opportunities of observing, with what gross and artless delusions men impose upon themselves; how readily they distinguish between actions, in the eye of justice and of reason equally criminal; how often they hope to elude the vengeance of Heaven, by substituting others to perpetrate the villanies they contrive; how often they mock God by groundless excuses; and how often they voluntarily shut their eyes, to leap into destruction.

There is another sense in which a man may be said to "bear false witness against his neighbour," a lower degree of the crime forbidden in the text, a degree in which multitudes are guilty of it; or, rather, from which scarcely any are entirely free. He that attacks the reputation of another by calumny, is doubtless, according to the malignity of the report, chargeable with the breach of this commandment.

Yet this is so universal a practice, that it is scarcely accounted criminal, or numbered among those sins which require repentance. Defamation is become one of the amusements of life, a cursory part of conversation and social entertainment. Men sport away the reputation of others, without the least reflection upon the injury which they are doing, and applaud the happiness of their own invention, if they can increase the mirth of a feast, or animate conviviality, by slander and detraction.

How it comes to pass, that men do not perceive the absurdity of distinguishing in such a manner between themselves and others, as to conceive that conduct innocent in themselves, which, in others, they would make no difficulty of condemning, it is not easy to tell. Yet it is apparent, that every man is sufficiently sensible, when his own character is attacked, of the cruelty and injustice of calumny; and it is not less evident, that those will animadvert, with all the wantonness of malice, upon the moral irregularities of others, whom the least reflection upon their own lives kindles into fury, and exasperates to the utmost severities of revenge.

To invent a defamatory falsehood, to rack the invention

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for the sake of disguising it with circumstances of probability, and propagate it industriously, till it becomes popular, and takes root in the minds of men, is such a continued act of malice, as nothing can palliate.

Nor will it be a sufficient vindication to allege, that the report, though not wholly, yet in part is true, and that it was no unreasonable suspicion that suggested the rest. For, if suspicion be admitted for certainty, every man's happiness must be entirely in the power of those bad men, whose consciousness of guilt makes them easily judge ill of others, or whom a natural, or habitual jealousy inclines to imagine frauds or villanies, where none is intended. And if small failings may be aggravated at the pleasure of the relater, who may not, however cautious, be made infamous and detestable? A calumny, in which falsehood is complicated with truth, and malice is assisted with probability, is more dangerous, and, therefore, less innocent, than unmixed forgery, and groundless invectives.

Neither is the first author only of a calumny a "false witness against his neighbour," but he, likewise, that disseminates and promotes it; since, without his assistance, it would perish as soon as it is produced, would evaporate in the air without effect, and hurt none but him that uttered it. He that blows a fire for the destruction of a city, is no less an incendiary than he that kindled it. And the man that imagines he may, without a crime, circulate a calumny which he has received from another, may, with equal reason, conceive that though it be murder to prepare poisons, it may be innocent to disperse them.

Many are the pleas and excuses, with which those, who cannot deny this practice, endeavour to palliate it. They frequently assert, in their own justification, that they do not know the relation, which they hand about, to be false. But to those it may be justly replied, that before they spread a report to the prejudice of others, they ought, if not to know that it is true, at least to believe it upon some reasonable grounds. They ought not to assist a

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random whisper, or drive forward a flying tale; they ought not, eagerly to catch at an opportunity of hurting, or add weight to a blow which may, perhaps, be undeserved.

It may happen, indeed, that a calumny may be supported by such testimony, and connected with such probabilities, as may deceive the circumspect and just; and the reporter, in such cases, is by no means to be charged with bearing false witness; because to believe and disbelieve is not in our power; for there is a certain degree of evidence, to which a man cannot but yield. He, therefore, who is deceived himself, cannot be accused of deceiving others, and is only so far blamable, as he contributed to the dishonour or prejudice of another, by spreading his faults without any just occasion, or lawful cause. For to relate reproachful truths, only for the pleasure of depressing the reputation of our neighbour, is far from being innocent. The crime, indeed, doth not fall under the head of calumny, but only differs from it in the falsehood, not in the malice.

There is another occasion made use of, by which, if this fault should escape from censure, many others might enjoy the same advantage. It is urged by some, that they do not adopt the tale, till it is generally received, and only promote what they cannot hinder. But how must wickedness be controlled, if its prevalence be a reason for compliance? Is it equitable and just to coalesce with oppressors, because they are already too powerful for the injured to resist? Thus any man might vindicate rebellion, by affirming that he did not join with the rebels, till they were already numerous enough to dethrone their prince. Thus a man may exempt himself from blame, for betraying his trust, and selling his country, by alleging that others had already sold it, and he only entered into the combination, that he might share the reward of perfidy. But it requires few arguments to show the folly of such pleas as these. It is the duty of every man to regulate his conduct, not by the example of others, or by his own sur-

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mises, but by the invariable rules of equity and truth. Wickedness must be opposed by some, or virtue would be entirely driven out of the world. And who must oppose it in extremities, if, as it increases more, it be less criminal to yield without resistance? If this excuse will vindicate one man, it will vindicate another; and no man will be found, who is obliged to maintain a post, from which others may fly without a crime, and to endeavour to reform the world, by which it is no reproach to be vitiated. If this reasoning were just, there might be a state of general depravity, in which wickedness might lose its guilt, since every man might be led away by predominant corruption, and the universality of vice become its own defence.

In such a situation, indeed, there is a necessity of an uncommon firmness and resolution to persist in the right, without regard to ridicule on the one hand, or interest on the other. But this resolution must be summoned; we must call up all our strength, and awaken all our caution, and in defiance of iniquity, however warranted by fashion, or supported by power, maintain an unshaken integrity, and reproach the world by a good example, if we cannot amend it.

There is yet another way, by which we may partake, in some measure, of the sin of bearing false witness. That he, who does not hinder the commission of a crime, involves himself in the guilt, cannot be denied; and that his guilt is yet more flagrant, if instead of obstructing, he encourages it, is equally evident. He, therefore, that receives a calumny with applause, or listens to it with a silent approbation, must be at least chargeable with conniving at wrong, which will be found no trivial accusation, when we have considered,

SECONDLY: The enormity of the sin of bearing false witness.

The malignity of an offence arises, either from the motives that prompted it, or the consequences produced by it.

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If we examine the sin of calumny by this rule, we shall find both the motives and consequences of the worst kind. We shall find its causes and effects concurring to distinguish it from common wickedness, and rank it with those crimes that pollute the earth, and blacken human nature.

The most usual incitement to defamation is envy, or impatience of the merit, or success of others; a malice raised not by any injury received, but merely by the sight of that happiness which we cannot attain. This is a passion, of all others most hurtful and contemptible; it is pride complicated with laziness; pride which inclines us to wish ourselves upon the level with others, and laziness which hinders us from pursuing our inclinations with vigour and assiduity. Nothing then remains but that the envious man endeavour to stop those, by some artifice, whom he will not strive to overtake, and reduce his superiours to his own meanness, since he cannot rise to their elevation. To this end he examines their conduct with a resolution to condemn it; and, if he can find no remarkable defects, makes no scruple to aggravate smaller errours, till by adding one vice to another, and detracting from their virtues by degrees, he has divested them of that reputation which obscured his own, and left them no qualities to be admitted or rewarded.

Calumnies are sometimes the offspring of resentment. When a man is opposed in a design which he cannot justify, and defeated in the prosecution of schemes of tyranny, extortion, or oppression, he seldom fails to revenge his overthrow by blackening that integrity which effected it. No rage is more fierce than that of a villain disappointed of those advantages which he has pursued by a long train of wickedness. He has forfeited the esteem of mankind, he has burdened his conscience, and hazarded his future happiness, to no purpose, and has now nothing to hope but the satisfaction of involving those, who have broken his measures, in misfortunes and disgrace. By wretches like these it is no wonder if the vilest arts of detraction are practised without scruple, since both their re-

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sentment and their interest direct them to depress those, whose influence and authority will be employed against them.

But what can be said of those who, without being impelled by any violence of passion, without having received any injury or provocation, and without any motives of interest, vilify the deserving and the worthless without distinction; and, merely to gratify the levity of temper and incontinence of tongue, throw out aspersions equally dangerous with those of virulence and enmity?

These always reckon themselves, and are commonly reckoned by those whose gaiety they promote, among the benevolent, the candid, and the humane; men without gall or malignity, friends to good-humour, and lovers of a jest. But, upon a more serious estimation, will they not be, with far greater propriety, classed with the cruel and the selfish wretches that feel no anguish at sacrificing the happiness of mankind to the lowest views, to the poor ambition of excelling in scurrility? To deserve the exalted character of humanity and good nature, a man must mean well; it is not sufficient to mean nothing. He must act and think with generous views, not with a total disregard of all the consequences of his behaviour. Otherwise, with all his wit and all his laughter, what character can he deserve, but that of "the fool, who scatters firebrands, arrows, and death, and says, am I not in sport."

The consequences of this crime, whatever be the inducement to commit it, are equally pernicious. He that attacks the reputation of another, invades the most valuable part of his property, and, perhaps, the only part which he can call his own. Calumny can take away what is out of the reach of tyranny and usurpation, and what may enable the sufferer to repair the injuries received from the hand of oppression. The persecutions of power may injure the fortune of a good man; but those of calumny must complete his ruin.

Nothing can so much obstruct the progress of virtue, as

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the defamation of those that excel in it. For praise is one motive, even in the best minds, to superiour and distinguishing degrees of goodness; and, therefore, he that reduces all men to the same state of infamy, at least deprives them of one reward which is due to merit, and takes away one incitement to it. But the effect does not terminate here. Calumny destroys that influence, and power of example, which operates much more forcibly upon the minds of men, than the solemnity of laws, or the fear of punishment. Our natural and real power is very small; and it is by the ascendant which he has gained, and the esteem in which he is held, that any man is able to govern others, to maintain order in society, or to perform any important service to mankind, to which the united endeavours of numbers are required. This ascendant, which, when conferred upon bad men by superiority of riches, or hereditary honour, is frequently made use of to corrupt and deprave the world, to justify debauchery, and shelter villainy, might be employed, if it were to be obtained only by desert, to the noblest purposes. It might discountenance vanity and folly; it might make the fashion cooperate with the laws, and reform those upon whom reason and conviction have no force.

Calumny differs from most other injuries in this dreadful circumstance. He who commits it, never can repair it. A false report may spread, where a recantation never reaches; and an accusation must certainly fly faster than a defence, while the greater part of mankind are base and wicked. The effects of a false report cannot be determined, or circumscribed. It may check a hero in his attempts for the promotion of the happiness of his country, or a saint in his endeavours for the propagation of truth.

Since, therefore, this sin is so destructive to mankind, and, by consequence, so detestable in the sight of God, it is necessary that we inquire,

THIRDLY: What reflections may best enable us to avoid it.

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The way to avoid effects is to avoid the causes. Whoever, therefore, would not be tempted "to bear false witness," must endeavour to suppress those passions which may incite him to it. Let the envious man consider, that by detracting from the character of others, he in reality adds nothing to his own; and the malicious man, that nothing is more inconsistent with every law of God, and institution of men, than implacability and revenge.

If men would spend more time in examining their own lives, and inspecting their own characters, they would have less leisure, and less inclination, to remark with severity upon others. They would easily discover, that it will not be for their advantage to exasperate their neighbour, and that a scandalous falsehood may be easily revenged by a reproachful truth.

It was determined by our blessed Saviour, in a case of open and uncontested guilt, that "he who was without fault," should "cast the first stone." This seems intended to teach us compassion even to the failings of bad men; and certainly that religion which extends so much indulgence to the bad, as to restrain us from the utmost rigour of punishment, cannot be doubted to require that the good should be exempted from calumny and reproach.

Let it be always remembered, that charity is the height of religious excellence; and that it is one of the characteristicks of this virtue, that it thinketh no evil of others.

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SERMON XVIII.

[PREACHED AT ASHBOURN.]

" Nay, you do wrong and defraud, and that your brethren." 1 Cor. vi. 8.

To subdue passion, and regulate desire, is the great task of man, as a moral agent; a task, for which natural reason, however assisted and enforced by human laws, has been found insufficient, and which cannot be performed but by the help of religion.

The passions are divided by moralists into irascible and concupiscible; the passions of resentment, and the passions of desire. The danger of the irascible passions, the mischiefs of anger, envy, and revenge, every man knows, by evil which he has felt, or evil which he has perpetrated. In their lower degrees, they produce brutality, outrage, contumely, and calumny; and, when they are inflamed to the utmost, have too often risen to violence and bloodshed.

Of these passions, the mischief is sometimes great, but not very frequent; for we are taught to watch and oppose them, from our earliest years. Their malignity is universally known, and as universally dreaded. The occasions that can raise them high, do not often occur; and when they are raised, if there be no immediate opportunity of gratifying them, they yield to reason and persuasion, or subside by the soothing influence of time.

Of the irascible passions, the direct aim, and present purpose, is the hurt, or misery of another; of the concupiscible passions, the proper motive is our own good. It is, therefore, no reproach to human nature, that the concupiscible passions are more prevalent; for as it is more natural, it is more just, to desire our own good, than another's evil.

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The desire of happiness is inseparable from a rational being, acquainted, by experience, with the various gradations of pain and pleasure. The knowledge of different degrees of happiness seems necessary to the excitement of desire, and the stimulation of activity. He that had never felt pain, would not fear it, nor use any precaution to prevent it. He who had been always equally at ease, would not know that his condition admitted any improvement, and, therefore, could have no end to pursue, or purpose to prosecute. But man, in his present state, knowing of how much good he is capable, and to how many evils he is exposed, has his mind perpetually employed, in defence, or in acquisition, in securing that which he has, or attaining that which, he believes, he either does, or shall, want.

He that desires happiness must necessarily desire the means of happiness, must wish to appropriate, and accumulate, whatever may satisfy his desires. It is not sufficient to be without want. He will try to place himself beyond the fear of want; and endeavour to provide future gratifications for future wishes, and lay up in store future provisions for future necessities.

It is by the effect of this care to provide against the evils, and to attain the blessings of life, that human society has its present form. For this purpose professions are studied, and trades learned; dangers are encountered, and labour endured. For this reason every man educates his son in some useful art, which, by making him necessary to others, may oblige others to repay him what is necessary to himself. The general employment of mankind is to increase pleasure, or remove the pressure of pain. These are the vital principles of action, that fill ports with ships, shops with manufactures, and fields with husbandmen, that keep the statesman diligent in attendance, and the trader active in his business.

It is apparently the opinion of the civilized world, that he who would be happy must be rich. In riches the goods of life are compendiously contained. They do not enlarge our own personal powers; but they enable us to

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employ the powers of others for our advantage. He who cannot make what he wants, will, however, easily procure it, if he can pay an artist. He who suffers any remediable inconvenience, needs not to suffer it long, if he can reward the labour of those who are able to remove it. Riches will make an ignorant man prudent by another's wisdom, and a weak man vigorous by another's strength. It can, therefore, be no wonder, that riches are generally desired; and that almost every man is busy, through his whole life, in gaining, or in keeping them, for himself, or his posterity.

As there is no desire so extensive, or so continual in its exertions, that possesses so many minds, or operates with such restless activity; there is none that deviates into greater irregularity, or more frequently corrupts the heart of man, than the wish to enlarge possession and accumulate wealth.

In a discourse, intended for popular instruction, it would be of little utility to mention the ambition of kings, and display the cruelty of conquerors. To slaughter thousands in a day, to spread desolation over wide and fertile regions, and to carry rapine and destruction indiscriminately from one country to another, can be the crime only of those few who have sceptres in their hands; and, even among them, the wantonness of war is not very common in our days. But it is a sufficient evidence of the power of interest, that such acts should ever have been perpetrated; that there could ever be any man, willing to augment his wealth, or extend his power, by slaughter and devastation; or able to persuade himself, that he might purchase advantages, which he could enjoy only in imagination, at the expense of the lives of thousands of his subjects, as well as his adversaries; of adversaries that never had injured or offended him, and of subjects whom it was his duty and his engagement to preserve and to protect.

Nor is it necessary to mention crimes, which are commonly found amongst the lowest of mankind, the

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crimes of robbery and theft. For, though they are too common, their enormity is sufficiently understood by the laws which are enacted against them, and sufficiently menaced by the terrours which those laws hold out. They are so apparently destructive of social security, their consequences are so easily perceived, and their perniciousness so generally acknowledged, that to be suspected of them is to be infamous; and to be detected in the commission of them, is to be exposed to punishment, and often to death.

But there is another mode of injuring the property of others, and of gaining unjust advantages, which, though not equally liable, at all times, to punishment, with theft and robbery, is, in its own nature, equally criminal, and perhaps more pernicious; therefore, equally open to the censures of reason and religion. This species of guilt is distinguished by the appellation of fraud; a word which, when uttered, really excites a due degree of detestation, and which those, who practise it, perhaps disguise to their consciences by still softer terms.

But that such disguises may deceive the soul no longer; and that what is universally mischievous may be totally abhorred; I shall endeavour to show,

FIRST: The nature of fraud, and the temptations to practise it.

SECONDLY: How much it is contrary to the rules of religion, and how much it obstructs the happiness of the world.

The nature of fraud, as distinct from other violations of right or property, seems to consist in this, that the man injured is induced to concur in the act by which the injury is done. Thus, to take away any thing valuable, without the owner's knowledge, is a theft; to take it away, against his consent, by threats or force, is a robbery; to borrow it, without intention of returning it, is a fraud, because the owner consents to the act, by which it passed out of his own hands.

All fraud, therefore, supposes deceit, either in the affir-

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mation of what is false, or the suppression of what is true; for no man willingly wrongs himself. He must be deceived, either by false appearances of the present, or by false promises of the future, by a display of fictitious advantages, or an artful concealment of certain inconveniencies.

As it often happens, that in committing a fraud, or persuading a man to injure himself, a considerable degree of skill and dexterity is required; the fraudulent are often considered, by themselves and others, as possessing uncommon powers of understanding, so that, though the act itself is blamed, the artifice is admired. Conscience is overpowered by vanity, and the shame of guilt is lost in the pride of subtilty and acuteness.

It is to be feared, that the science of overreaching is too closely connected with lucrative commerce. There are classes of men, who do little less than profess it, and who are scarcely ashamed, when they are detected in imposture. Such men live, indeed, without reputation. They are considered as exercising dishonourable employments, but they are still tolerated; and, however they may be despised, are very rarely punished. The whole practice of buying and selling is indeed replete with temptation, which even a virtuous mind finds it difficult to resist. "A merchant shall hardly keep himself from doing wrong, and an huckster shall not be freed from sin," Ecclesiasticus xxvi. 29. "Many have sinned for a small matter; and he that seeketh for abundance, will turn his eyes away. As a nail sticketh fast between the joinings of the stones, so doth sin stick close between buying and selling," Eccl. xxvii. 1, 2. Such is the censure of the Son of Sirach, which surely cannot be heard without alarm and terrour.

It is, however, by no means to be admitted, that all trade is necessarily fraudulent, or that all traders are dishonest. Every kind of life has its peculiar dangers, which the negligent incur, and the wise escape. The danger of a trader, like that of others, may be avoided by resolution, vigilance, and prayer, by a constant reference of his actions

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to his eternal interest, and by the help of God diligently implored.

That the necessity of this vigilance may be more strongly recommended, it is fit that we consider,

SECONDLY: How much the practice of fraud is contrary to religion, and how much it obstructs the happiness of the world.

The great rule, by which religion regulates all transactions between one man and another, is, that every man "should do to others what he would expect that others," in the same case, "should do to him." This rule is violated in every act of fraud. For, however the "children of the world" may forgive, or applaud, themselves, when they practise fraud, they complain very loudly, when they suffer it. They then can clearly discern its baseness, and its mischief; and discover, that nothing deserves praise but purity and goodness.

The crime of fraud has this aggravation, that it is generally an abuse of confidence. Robberies of violence are committed commonly upon those, to whom the robber is unknown. The lurking thief takes indiscriminately what comes by chance within his reach. But deceit cannot be practised, unless by some previous treaty, and gradual advance, by which distrust is dissipated, and an opinion of candour and integrity excited. Fraud, therefore, necessarily disguises life with solitude and suspicion. He that has been deceived, knows not afterwards whom he can trust, but grows timorous, reserved, afraid alike of enemies and friends; and loses, at least, part of that benevolence which is necessary to an amiable and virtuous character.

Fraud is the more to be suppressed by universal detestation, as its effects can scarcely be limited. A thief seldom takes away what can much impoverish the loser; but by fraud, the opulent may at once be reduced to indigence, and the prosperous distressed; the effects of a long course of industry may be suddenly annihilated, the provision made for age may be withdrawn, and the inheritance of posterity intercepted.

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For the particular application of this doctrine, I am sorry that my native place should afford an opportunity. But since this society has called me to stand here before them, I hope no man will be offended, that I do my duty with fidelity and freedom. Truth requires, that I warn you against a species of fraud, sometimes found amongst you, and that of a very shameful and oppressive kind. When any man, whose contributions have had their due part in raising the fund for occasional relief, is reduced by disease, or hurt, to want the support which he has, perhaps, for many years, supposed himself gradually accumulating against the day of distress, and for which he has denied himself many gratifications; at the time, when he expects the beneficial effects of his prudence and parsimony; at that very time, every artifice is used to defeat his claim, and elude his right. He declares himself, perhaps, unable to work, by which nothing more can reasonably be meant, than that he is no longer capable of labour equal to his livelihood. This man is found employing the remains of his strength in some little office. For this surely he deserves to be commended. But what has been the consequence? He has been considered as an impostor, who claims the benefit of the fund by counterfeited incapacity; and that feeble diligence, which, among reasonable and equitable men, gives him a title to esteem and pity, is misapplied, and misrepresented into a pretence for depriving him of his right, and this done by judges, who vainly imagine they shall be benefited themselves by their own wicked determination.

It is always to be remembered, that a demand of support from your common fund is not a petition for charity, but a claim to justice. The relief, thus demanded, is not a gift, but a debt. He that receives it, has first purchased it. The denial of it, therefore, is a fraud and a robbery; and fraud so much the more atrocious and detestable, as, by its nature, it must always be practised on the poor. When this succour is required, there is no place for favour, or for resentment. What is due must be paid, because it

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is due. Other considerations have here no weight. The amiable and the perverse, the good and the bad, have an equal right to the performance of their contract. He that has trusted the society with his money, cannot, without breach of faith, be denied that payment, which, when he payed his contribution, was solemnly stipulated.

It has been always observed by the wise, that it is every man's real interest to be honest; and he who practises fraud, to the injury of others, shows, at the same time, how fraud may be practised against himself. Those who have been forward in watching the steps of others, and have objected to payment when it was required, may live to be themselves watched, and excluded by a precedent, which their own fraudulence, or malice, has incited them to establish. They will then feel the folly of wickedness, and know the necessity of providing against the day of calamity by innocence and integrity; they will wish that they could claim the kindness of others, as a recompense for kindness formerly exhibited by themselves.

Fraud is the more hurtful, because the wrong is often without redress. As he that is wronged by fraudulent practices must always concur in the act that injured him, it is not always easy to ascertain the exact limits of his agency, so as to know precisely how far he was deceived. This, at least, is seldom to be done without an inquiry and discussion, liable to many legal delays, and eludible by many artifices. The redress, therefore, is often more pernicious than the injury; and while the robber lurks in secret, or flies for his life, the man of fraud holds up his head with confidence, enjoys the fruits of his iniquity with security, and bids defiance to detection and to punishment.

But this triumph, however he may escape human judicatures, must end with his life. The time will come, and will come quickly, when he that has defrauded his neighbour, must stand before the Judge of all the earth, a Judge whom he cannot deceive; and before whom, whatever he has taken wrongfully, without restitution, and without repentance, will lie heavy on his soul.

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"Let him, therefore, that has stolen, steal no more!" let him that has gained by fraud, repent and restore, and live and die in the exercise of honesty!

SERMON XIX.

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. ix. 7.

THE frequency with which the duty of alms-giving has of late been recommended; the perspicuity with which it has, on many occasions, been explained; the force of argument by which its necessity has been proved to the reason, and the ardour of zeal with which it has been impressed upon the passions; make it reasonable to believe, that is now generally understood, and that very few of those, who frequent the publick worship, and attend with proper diligence to instruction, can receive much information, with regard to the excellence and importance of this virtue.

But as most of the crimes and miseries of our lives arise rather from negligence than ignorance; as those obligations which are best known, are sometimes, from the security to which the consciousness of our knowledge naturally betrays us, most easily forgotten; and as the impressions which are made upon the heart, however strong or durable they may at first appear, are easily weakened by time, and effaced by the perpetual succession of other objects, which crowd the memory, and distract the attention; it is necessary that this great duty should be frequently explained, that our ardour should be rekindled by new motion, our conviction awakened by new persuasions, and our minds enlightened by frequent repetitions of the instructions, which, if not recollected, must quickly lose their effect.

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Every man, who has either applied himself to the examination of his own conduct with care proportioned to the importance of the inquiry, or indulged himself in the more frequent employment of inspecting the behaviour of others, has had many opportunities of observing, with how much difficulty the precepts of religion are long preserved in their full force; how insensibly the ways of virtue are forsaken; and into what depravity those, who trust too much to their own strength, sometimes fall, by neglecting to press forward, and to confirm their resolution by the same methods as they at first excited it. Innumerable temptations continually surround us, and innumerable obstructions oppose us. We are lulled with indolence, we are seduced by pleasure, we are perverted by bad examples, and we are betrayed by our own hearts. No sooner do we, in compliance either with the vanities, or the business of life, relax our attention to the doctrines of piety, than we grow cold and indifferent, dilatory and negligent. When we are again called to our duty, we find our minds entangled with a thousand objections; we are ready to plead every avocation, however trifling, as an exemption from the necessity of holy practices; and, because we readily satisfy ourselves with our excuses, we are willing to imagine that we shall satisfy God, the God of infinite holiness and justice, who sees the most secret motions of our minds, who penetrates through all our hypocrisy, and upon whom disinclination can be never imposed for inability.

With regard to the duty of charity, it is too common for men of avaricious and worldly dispositions, to imagine that they may be saved without compliance with a command so little agreeable to their inclinations; and, therefore, though perhaps they cannot always resist the force of argument, or repel conviction at its first assault, yet, as they do not willingly suffer their minds to dwell upon reasonings which they scarcely wish to be true, or renew, by frequent recollection, that sense of their duty which they have received, they quickly relapse into their former

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sordid insensibility, and, by indulging every consideration which can be applied to the justification of parsimony, harden their hearts, and withhold their hands; and while they see the anguish of misery, and hear the cries of want, can pass by without pity, and without regard; and without even feeling any reproaches from their hearts, pray to God for that mercy which they have themselves denied to their fellow-beings.

One of the pleas, which is alleged in justification of the neglect of charity, is inability to practise it; an excuse, when real, to which no objection can be made; for it cannot be expected, that any man should give to another what he must himself want in the same degree. But this excuse is too frequently offered by those who are poor only in their own opinion, who have habituated themselves to look on those that are above, rather than on those that are below them, and cannot account themselves rich, while they see any richer; men who measure their revenues, not by the wants of nature, but by the demands of vanity! and who have nothing to give, only because they will not diminish any particle of their splendour, nor reduce the pomp of their equipage; who, while their tables are heaped with delicacies, and their houses crowded with festal assemblies, suffer the poor to languish in the streets in miseries and in want, complain that their fortunes are not equal to the generosity of their minds, and applaud their own inclinations to charity and mercy; inclinations which are never exerted in beneficence, because they cannot spare any thing from their appetites and their pride.

Others there are, who frequently delight to dwell upon the excellency of charity, and profess themselves ready to comply with its precepts, whenever proper objects shall be proposed, and an opportunity of proper application shall be found; but they pretend that they are so well informed, with regard to the perversion of charity, and discover so many ill effects of indistinguishing and careless liberality, that they are not easily satisfied with the occasions which are offered them. They are sometimes afraid of en-

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couraging idleness, and sometimes of countenancing imposture, and so readily find objections to every method of charity that can be mentioned to them, that their good inclinations are of very little advantage to the rest of mankind; but, however, they congratulate themselves upon their merit, and still applaud that generosity by which calamity was never softened, and by which want never was relieved.

But that all these imaginary pleas may be once more confuted, that the opportunity of charity, which providence has this day put into our hands, may not be neglected, and that our alms may be given in such a manner as may obtain acceptance with the great Judge of all the earth, who has promised to show mercy to the merciful, I shall endeavour to lay before you,

FIRST: The importance and necessity of the practice of charity.

SECONDLY: The disposition of mind, which is necessary to make our alms acceptable to God.

THIRDLY: The reasonableness of laying hold on the present opportunity for the exercise of our charity.

And, FIRST: I shall endeavour to show the importance and necessity of the practice of charity. The importance and necessity of charity is so evident, that as it might be hoped that no proof could be necessary, so it is difficult to produce any arguments which do not occur of themselves to every reasonable and attentive mind. For whither can we turn our thoughts, or direct our eyes, where we shall not find some motive to the exercise of charity?

If we look up to heaven, which we have been taught to consider as the particular residence of the Supreme Being, we find there our Creator, our Preserver, and our Judge; our Creator, whose infinite power gave us our existence, and who has taught us, by that gift, that bounty is agreeable to his nature; our Preserver, of whose assistance and protection we are, every day and every moment, in need, and whose favour we can hope to secure

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only by imitating his goodness, and endeavouring the assistance and protection of each other; and our Judge, who has already declared that the merciful shall obtain mercy, and that in the awful day, in which every man shall be recompensed according to his works, he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.

If we cast our eyes over the earth, and extend our observations through the system of human beings, what shall we find but scenes of misery and innumerable varieties of calamity and distress, the pains of sickness, the wounds of casualty, the gripings of hunger, and the cold of nakedness; wretches wandering without an habitation, exposed to the contempt of the proud, and the insults of the cruel, goaded forward, by the stings of poverty, to dishonest acts, which perhaps relieve their present misery, only to draw some more dreadful distress upon them? And what are we taught, by all these different states of unhappiness? what, but the necessity of that virtue by which they are relieved; by which the orphan may be supplied with a father, and the widow with a defender; by which nakedness may be clothed, sickness set free from adventitious pains; the stranger solaced in his wanderings, and the hungry restored to vigour and to ease?

If we turn from these melancholy prospects, and cast our eyes upon ourselves, what shall we find, but a precarious and frail being, surrounded on every side with danger, and besieged with miseries and with wants? miseries, which we cannot avert by our own power, and wants which our own abilities cannot supply. We perceive ourselves wholly unable to stand alone, and compelled to solicit, every moment, the assistance of our fellow-creatures; whom, perhaps, our Maker enables us at present to repay by mutual kindness, but whom we know not how soon we may be necessitated to implore, without the capacity of returning their beneficence.

This reflection surely ought immediately to convince us of the necessity of charity; prudence, even without religion, ought to admonish every one to assist the helpless, and

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relieve the wretched, that, when the day of distress shall come upon him, he may confidently ask that assistance which he himself, in his prosperity, never did deny.

As it has pleased God to place us in a state, in which we are surrounded with innumerable temptations; so it has pleased him, on many occasions, to afford us temporal incitements to virtue, as a counterbalance to the allurements of sin; and to set before us rewards which may be obtained, and punishments which may be suffered, before the final determination of our future state. As charity is one of our most important duties, we are pressed to its practice by every principle of secular, as well as religious wisdom; and no man can suffer himself to be distinguished for hardness of heart, without danger of feeling the consequence of his wickedness in his present state; because no man can secure to himself the continuance of riches, or of power; nor can prove, that he shall not himself want the assistance which he now denies, and perhaps be compelled to implore it from those whose petition he now rejects, and whose miseries he now insults. Such is the instability of human affairs, and so frequently does God assert his government of the world, by exalting the low, and depressing the powerful.

If we endeavour to consult higher wisdom than our own, with relation to this duty, and examine the opinions of the rest of mankind, it will be found, that all the nations of the earth, however they may differ with regard to every other tenet, yet agree in the celebration of benevolence, as the most amiable disposition of the heart, and the foundation of all happiness. We shall find that, in every place, men are loved and honoured in proportion to the gifts which they have conferred upon mankind, and that nothing but charity can recommend one man to the affection of another.

But if we appeal, as is undoubtedly reasonable and just, from human wisdom to Divine, and search the Holy Scriptures, to settle our notions of the importance of this duty,

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we shall need no further incitements to its practice; for every part of that sacred volume is filled with precepts that direct, or examples that inculcate it. The practice of hospitality among the patriarchs, the confidence of Job, amidst his afflictions, arising from the remembrance of his former charity.

The precepts of the prophets, and the conduct of the holy men of all times, concur to enforce the duty of attending to the cries of misery, and endeavouring to relieve the calamities of life.

But surely all further proof will be superseded, when the declaration of our blessed Redeemer is remembered, who has condescended to inform us that those who have shown mercy shall find mercy from him, that the practice of charity will be the great test by which we shall be judged, and that those, and those only, who have given food to the hungry, and raiment to the naked, shall, at the final doom, be numbered by the Son of God amongst the blessed of his Father.

There can nothing more be added to show the necessity of the practice of charity; for what can be expected to move him, by whom everlasting felicity is disregarded; and who hears without emotion, never-ending miseries threatened by Omnipotence? It, therefore, now remains that we inquire,

SECONDLY: How we may practise this duty, in a manner pleasing to him who commanded it; or what disposition of mind is necessary to make our alms acceptable to God.

Our Saviour, as he has informed us of the necessity of charity, has not omitted to teach us likewise how our acts of charity are to be performed. And from his own precepts, and those of his apostles, may be learned all the cautions necessary to obviate the deceit of our own hearts, and to preserve us from falling into follies dangerous to our souls, while we imagine ourselves advancing in the favour of God.

We are commanded by Jesus Christ, when we give our

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alms, to divest ourselves of pride, vain-glory, and desire of applause: we are forbidden to give, that we may be seen of men, and instructed so to conduct our charity, that it may be known to our Father which seeth in secret. By this precept it is not to be understood, that we are forbidden to give alms in publick, or where we may be seen of men; for our Saviour has also commanded, that our "light should so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven." The meaning, therefore, of this text is not that we should forbear to give alms in the sight of men, but that we should not suffer the presence of men to act as the motive to our charity, nor regard their praise as any object to our wishes; a precept surely reasonable; for how can that act be virtuous, which depends not upon our own choice, but upon that of others, and which we should not have performed, if we had not expected that they would have applauded it?

Of the same kind, though somewhat different in its immediate and literal acceptation, is the instruction contained in the text, in which we are taught by St. Paul, that every man ought to give according to the purpose of his own heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity; by which it is commanded, that we should, as our Saviour had already taught us, lay aside, in the distribution of our alms, all regard to human authority; that we should give according to the purpose of our own hearts, without respect to solicitation or influence; that we should give, because God has commanded, and give cheerfully, as a proof of ready and uncompelled obedience; obedience uncompelled by any other motive than a due sense of our dependence upon the universal Lord, and the reasonableness of observing the law of him by whom we were created.

There are likewise other rules to be observed in the practice of charity, which may be gathered, at least consequentially, from the Holy Scriptures; and which the common prudence of mankind at the same time evidently prescribes. It is necessary that, in bestowing our alms, we

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should endeavour to promote the service of God, and the general happiness of society, and, therefore, we ought not to give them without inquiry into the ends for which they are desired; we ought not to suffer our beneficence to be made instrumental to the encouragement of vice, or the support of idleness; because what is thus squandered may be wanted by others, who would use our kindness to better purposes, and who, without our assistance, would perhaps perish.

Another precept, too often neglected, which yet a generous and elevated mind would naturally think highly necessary to be observed, is, that alms should be given in such a manner as may be most pleasing to the person who receives them; that our charity should not be accompanied with insults, nor followed by reproaches; that we should, whenever it is possible, spare the wretched the unnecessary, the mortifying pain of recounting their calamities, and representing their distress; and when we have relieved them we should never upbraid them with our kindness, nor recall their afflictions to their minds by cruel and unseasonable admonitions to gratitude or industry. He only confers favours generously, who appears, when they are once conferred, to remember them no more.

Poverty is in itself sufficiently afflictive, and to most minds the pain of wanting assistance is scarcely balanced by the pleasure of receiving it. The end of charity is to mitigate calamities; and he has little title to the reward of mercy, who afflicts with one hand, while he succours with the other. But this fault, like many others, arises from pride, and from the desire of temporal rewards. Men either forget the common nature of humanity, and, therefore, reproach others with those misfortunes to which they are themselves equally subject; or they expect, from the gratitude, or applause, of those whom they benefit, that reward which they are commanded to hope only from their Father which is in heaven.

Such are the rules of charity, and such the cautions required, to make our alms pleasing to him, in whose name

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they ought to be given; and, that they may be now given not grudgingly, or of necessity, but with that cheerfulness which the apostle recommends as necessary to draw down the love of God upon those by whom they are bestowed, let us consider,

THIRDLY: The reasonableness of laying hold on the present opportunity for the exercise of our charity.

It is just that we should consider every opportunity of performing a good action as the gift of God, one of the chief gifts which God bestows upon man, in his present state, and endeavour to improve the blessing, that it may not be withdrawn from us, as a talent unemployed; for it is not certain, that he, who neglects this call to his duty, will be permitted to live till he hears another. It is likewise reasonable to seize this opportunity, because perhaps none can be afforded of more useful or beneficial charity, none in which all the various purposes of charity are more compendiously united.

It cannot be said, that, by this charity, idleness is encouraged; for those who are to be benefited by it are at present incapable of labour, but hereafter designed for it. Nor can it be said, that vice is countenanced by it, for many of them cannot yet be vitious. Those who now give cannot bestow their alms for the pleasure of hearing their charity acknowledged, for they who shall receive it will not know their benefactors.

The immediate effect of alms given on this occasion, is not only food to the hungry, and clothes to the naked, and an habitation to the destitute, but, what is of more lasting advantage, instruction to the ignorant.

He that supports an infant, enables him to live here; but he that educates him, assists him in his passage to a happier state, and prevents that wickedness which is, if not the necessary, yet the frequent consequence of unenlightened infancy and vagrant poverty.

Nor does this charity terminate in the persons upon whom it is conferred, but extends its influence through the whole state, which has very frequently experienced,

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how much is to be dreaded from men, bred up without principles, and without employment. He who begs in the street in his infancy, learns only how to rob there in his manhood; and it is certainly very apparent, with how much less difficulty evils are prevented than remedied.

But though we should suppose, what reason and experience sufficiently disprove, that poverty and ignorance were calamities to those only on whom they fall, yet surely the sense of their misery might be sufficient to awaken us to compassion. For who can hear the cries of a naked infant, without remembering that he was himself once equally naked, equally helpless? Who can see the disorders of the ignorant, without remembering that he was born as ignorant as they? And who can forbear to reflect, that he ought to bestow on others those benefits which he received himself? Who, that shall see piety and wisdom promoted by his beneficence, can wish, that what he gives for such uses had been employed in any other manner? As the apostle exhorts to hospitality by observing that some have entertained angels unawares, let us animate ourselves to this charity by the hopes of educating saints. Let us endeavour to reclaim vice, and to improve innocence to holiness; and remember that the day is not far distant, in which our Saviour has promised to consider our gifts to these little ones as given to himself; and that "they who have turned many to righteousness shall shine forth as the sun, for ever and ever.

SERMON XX.

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." 2 PETER iii. 3.

A VERY little acquaintance with human nature will inform us, that there are few men who can patiently bear the

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imputation of being in the wrong; and that there is no action, how unreasonable or wicked soever it be, which those, who are guilty of it, will not attempt to vindicate, though, perhaps, by such a defence as aggravates the crime.

It is, indeed, common for men to conceal their faults, and gratify their passions in secret, and especially, when they are first initiated in vice, to make use rather of artifice and dissimulation, than audaciousness and effrontery. But the arts of hypocrisy, are, in time, exhausted, and some unhappy circumstance defeats those measures which they had laid for preventing a discovery. They are at length suspected, and, by that curiosity which suspicion always excites, closely pursued, and openly detected. It is then too late to think of deceiving mankind by false appearances, nor does any thing remain, but to avow boldly what can be no longer denied. Impudence is called in to the assistance of immorality; and the censures which cannot be escaped must be openly defied. Wickedness is in itself timorous, and naturally skulks in coverts and in darkness, but grows furious by despair, and, when it can fly no further, turns upon the pursuer.

Such is the state of a man abandoned to the indulgence of vitious inclinations. He justifies one crime by another; invents wicked principles to support wicked practices; endeavours rather to corrupt others, than own himself corrupted, and, to avoid that shame which a confession of his crimes would bring upon him, calls "evil good, and good evil, puts darkness for light, and light for darkness." He endeavours to trample upon those laws which he is known not to observe, to scoff at those truths which, if admitted, have an evident tendency to convict his whole behaviour of folly and absurdity, and, from having long neglected to obey God, rises at length into rebellion against him.

That no man ever became abandoned at once, is an old and common observation, which, like other assertions founded on experience, receives new confirmation by length of time. A man ventures upon wickedness, as

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upon waters with which he is unacquainted. He looks upon them with horrour, and shudders at the thought of quitting the shore, and committing his life to the inconstancy of the weather; but, by degrees, the scene grows familiar, his aversion abates, and is succeeded by curiosity. He launches out with fear and caution, always anxious and apprehensive, lest his vessel should be dashed against a rock, sucked in by a quicksand, or hurried by the currents beyond sight of shore. But his fears are daily lessening, and the deep becomes less formidable. In time he loses all sense of danger, ventures out with full security, and roves without inclination to return, till he is driven into the boundless ocean, tossed about by the tempests, and at last swallowed by the waves.

Most men have, or once had, an esteem and reverence for virtue, and a contempt and abhorrence of vice; of which, whether they were impressed by nature, implanted by education, or deduced and settled by reason, it is, at present, of very little importance to inquire. Such these notions are, however they were originally received, as reason cannot but adopt and strengthen, and every man will freely confess that reason ought to be the rule of his conduct. Whoever, therefore, recedes, in his practice, from rules of which he allows obligation, and suffers his passions to prevail over his opinions, feels at first a secret reluctance, is conscious of some sort of violence done to his intellectual powers; and though he will not deny himself that pleasure which is present before him, or that single gratification of his passions, he determines, or thinks he determines, that he will yield to no future temptation, that he will hereafter reject all the solicitation of his appetites, and live in such a manner as he should applaud in others, and as his own conscience should approve in himself.

Perhaps every man may recollect, that this was the temper of his mind, when he first permitted himself to deviate from the known paths of his duty, and that he never forsook them, in the early part of his life, without a

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design to return to them, and persevere in them; and that, when he was tempted another time, he complied, always with a tacit intention to add but this one more to his offences, and to spend the rest of his life in penitence and obedience. Perhaps there are very many among the most profligate, who frequently still their consciences, and animate their hopes, with views of reformation to be sincerely entered upon in some distant period of their lives, who propose to dedicate, at least, their last years to piety, and at some moments give way to wishes, that they may some time taste the satisfaction of a good life, and "die the death of the righteous."

But these, however given up to their desires and passions, however ignorant of their own weakness, and presumptuously confident of their natural powers, have not yet arrived at the summit of impiety, till they have learned, not only to neglect, but to insult religion, not only to be vitious, but to scoff at virtue.

This seems to be the last effect of a long continued habit of sin, the strongest evidence of a mind corrupted almost beyond hope of a recovery. Wickedness in this state seems to have extended its power from the passions to the understanding. Not only the desire of doing well is extinguished, but the discernment of good and evil obliterated and destroyed. Such is the infatuation produced by a long course of obstinate guilt.

Not only our speculations influence our practice, but our practice reciprocally influences our speculations. We not only do what we approve, but there is danger lest in time we come to approve what we do, though for no other reason but that we do it. A man is always desirous of being at peace with himself; and when he cannot reconcile his passions to his conscience, he will attempt to reconcile his conscience to his passions; he will find reason for doing what he resolved to do, and, rather than not "walk after his own lusts," will scoff at religion.

These scoffers may be divided into two distinct classes, to be addressed in a very different manner; those whom a

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constant prosecution of their lusts has deluded into a real disbelief of religion, or diverted from a serious examination of it; and those who are convinced of the truth of revelation, but affect to contemn and ridicule it from motives of interest or vanity.

I shall endeavour, therefore, to evince,

FIRST: The folly of scoffing at religion in those who doubt the truth of it. And,

SECONDLY: The wickedness of this practice in those who believe it.

FIRST: I shall endeavour to evince the folly of scoffing at religion in those who doubt the truth of it.

Those who in reality disbelieve, or doubt of religion, however negligent they may be in their inquiries after truth, generally profess the highest reverence for it, the sincerest desire to discover it, an the strongest resolutions to adhere to it. They will frequently assert, and with good reason, that every man is valuable in proportion to his love of truth; that man enjoys the power of reason for this great end, that he may distinguish truth from falsehood; that not to search for it is the most criminal laziness, and not to declare it, in opposition to the frowns of power, or the prejudices of ignorance, the most despicable cowardice.

When they declaim on this darling subject, they seldom fail to take the opportunity of throwing out keen invectives against bigotry; bigotry, that voluntary blindness, that slavish submission to the notions of others, which shackles the power of the soul, and retards the progress of reason; that cloud, which intercepts our views, and throws a shade over the light of truth.

Such is the discourse of these men; and who, that hears it, would not expect from them the most disinterested impartiality, the most unwearied assiduity, and the most candid and sober attention to any thing proposed as an argument upon a subject worthy of their study? Who would not imagine that they made it the grand business of their lives to carry the art of reasoning to its greatest

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height, to enlighten the understanding of the ignorant by plain instructions enforced with solid arguments, and to establish every important truth upon the most certain and unshaken principles?

There seems to be nothing more inconsistent with so philosophical a character than careless vivacity and airy levity. The talents which qualify a man for a disputant and a buffoon seem very different; and an unprejudiced person would be inclined to form contrary ideas of an argument and a jest.

Study has been hitherto thought necessary to knowledge, and study cannot well be successfully prosecuted without solitude and leisure. It might, therefore, be conceived that this exalted sect is above the low employments and empty amusements of vulgar minds; that they avoid every thing which may interrupt their meditations, or perplex their ideas; and that, therefore, whoever stands in need of their instructions must seek them in privacies and retirements, in deserts or in cells.

But these men have discovered, it seems, a more compendious way to knowledge. They decide the most momentous questions amidst the jollity of feasts, and the excesses of riot. They have found that an adversary is more easily silenced than confuted. They insult, instead of vanquishing, their antagonists, and decline the battle to hasten to the triumph.

It is an established maxim among them, that he who ridicules an opinion confutes it. For this reason they make no scruple of violating every rule of decency, and treating with the utmost contempt whatever is accounted venerable or sacred.

For this conduct they admire themselves, and go on applauding their own abilities, celebrating the victories they gain over their grave opponents, and loudly boasting their superiority to the advocates for religion.

As humility is a very necessary qualification for an examiner into religion, it may not be improper to depress the arrogance of these haughty champions, by showing

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with how little justice they lay claim to victory, and how much less they deserve to be applauded than despised.

There are two circumstances which, either single or united, make any attainments estimable among men. The first is the usefulness of it to society. The other is the capacity or application necessary for acquiring it.

If we consider this art of scoffing with regard to either of these, we shall not find great reason to envy or admire it. It requires no depth of knowledge, or intenseness of thought. Contracted notions, and superficial views, are sufficient for a man who is ambitious only of being the author of a jest. That man may laugh who cannot reason; and he, that cannot comprehend a demonstration, may turn the terms to ridicule.

This method of controversy is, indeed, the general refuge of those whose idleness or incapacity disable them from producing any thing solid or convincing. They, who are certain of being confuted and exposed in a sober dispute, imagine that by returning scurrility for reason, and by laughing most loudly, when they have least to say, they shall shelter their ignorance from detection, and supply with impudence what they want in knowledge.

Nor will the possessours of this boasted talent or ridicule appear more to deserve respect on account of their usefulness to mankind. These gay sallies of imagination, when confined to proper subjects, and restrained within the bounds of decency, are of no farther use to mankind than to divert, and can have no higher place in our esteem than any other art that terminates in mere amusement.

But when men treat serious matters ludicrously, when they study, not for truth, but for a jest, when they unite the most awful and the most trifling ideas, only to tickle the imagination with the surprise of novelty, they no longer have the poor merit of diverting; they raise always either horrour or contempt, and hazard their highest

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interest, without even the low recompense of present applause.

That they hazard their highest interest can hardly be denied, when they determine, without the most scrupulous examination, those questions which relate to a future state; and none certainly are less likely to discuss these questions, with the care which they require, than those who accustom themselves to continual levity.

The mind, long vitiated with trifles, and entertained with wild and unnatural combinations of ideas, becomes, in a short time, unable to support the fatigue of reasoning; it is disgusted with a long succession of solemn images, and retires from serious meditation, and tiresome labour, to gayer fancies, and less difficult employments.

Besides, he that has practised the art of silencing others with a jest, in time learns to satisfy himself in the same manner. It becomes unnecessary to the tranquillity of his own mind to confute an objection; it is sufficient for him if he can ridicule it.

Thus he soon grows indifferent to truth or falsehood, and almost incapable of discerning one from the other. He considers eternity itself as a subject for mirth, and is equally ludicrous upon all occasions.

What delusion, what bigotry, is equal to this! Men neglect to search after eternal happiness for fear of being interrupted in their mirth. If others have been misled, they have been misled by their reverence for great authorities, or by strong prejudices of education. Such errours may be extenuated, and perhaps excused. They have at least something plausible to plead, and their assertors act with some show of reason. But what can the most extensive charity allege in favour of those men who, if they perish everlastingly, perish by their attachment to merriment, and their confidence in a jest?

It is astonishing that any man can forbear inquiring seriously, whether there is a God; whether God is just; whether this life is the only state of existence; whether God has appointed rewards and punishments in a future

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state; whether he has given any laws for the regulation of our conduct here; whether he has given them by revelation; and whether the religion publickly taught carries any mark of Divine appointment. These are questions which every reasonable being ought undoubtedly to consider with an attention suitable to their importance; and he, whom the consideration of eternal happiness or misery cannot awaken from his pleasing dreams, cannot prevail upon to suspend his mirth, surely ought not to despise others for dulness and stupidity.

Let it be remembered, that the nature of things is not alterable by our conduct. We cannot make truth; it is our business only to find it. No proposition can become more or less certain or important, by being considered or neglected. It is to no purpose to wish, or to suppose, that to be false which is in itself true; and, therefore, to acquiesce in our own wishes and suppositions, when the matter is of eternal consequence, to believe obstinately without grounds of belief, and to determine without examination, is the last degree of folly and absurdity. It is not impossible that he who acts in this manner may obtain the approbation of madmen like himself, but he will incur the contempt of every wise man; and, what is more to be feared, amidst his security and supineness, his sallies and his flights, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh him to scorn; the Lord shall have him in derision."

Thus have I endeavoured to give a faint idea of the folly of those who scoff at religion, because they disbelieve, and, by scoffing, harden themselves in their disbelief. But I shall be yet more unable to describe, in a proper manner, what I am to mention in the second place.

The wickedness of those that believe religion, and yet deride it from motives of interest or vanity.

This is a degree of guilt against which it might seem, at the first view, superfluous to preach, because it might be thought impossible it should ever be committed; as, in ancient states, no punishment was decreed for the murderer of his father, because it was imagined to be a crime

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not incident to human nature. But experience taught them, and teaches us, that wickedness may swell beyond imagination, and that there are no limits to the madness of impiety.

For a man to revile and insult that God whose power he allows, to ridicule that revelation of which he believes the authority divine, to dare the vengeance of Omnipotence, and cry, "Am not I in sport!" is an infatuation incredible, a degree of madness without a name. Yet there are men who, by walking after their own lusts, and indulging their passions, have reached this stupendous height of wickedness. They have dared to teach falsehoods which they do not themselves believe; and to extinguish in others that conviction which they cannot suppress in themselves.

The motive of their proceeding is sometimes a desire of promoting their own pleasures by procuring accomplices in vice. Man is so far formed for society, that even solitary wickedness quickly disgusts; and debauchery requires its combinations and confederacies, which, as intemperance diminishes their numbers, must be filled up with new proselytes.

Let those who practise this dreadful method of depraving the morals, and ensnaring the soul, consider what they are engaged in! Let them consider what they are promoting, and what means they are employing! Let them pause, and reflect a little, before they do an injury that can never be repaired, before they take away what cannot be restored; before they corrupt the heart of their companion by perverting his opinions, before they lead him into sin, and by destroying his reverence for religion, take away every motive to repentance, and all the means of reformation!

This is a degree of guilt, before which robbery, perjury, and murder, vanish into nothing. No mischief, of which the consequences terminate in our present state, bears any proportion to the crime of decoying our brother into the broad way of eternal misery, and stopping his ears against that holy voice that recalls him to salvation.

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What must be the anguish of such a man, when he becomes sensible of his own crimes! How will he bear the thought of having promoted the damnation of multitudes by the propagation of known delusions! What lasting contrition, what severe repentance, must be necessary for such deep and such accumulated guilt! Surely if blood be required for blood, a soul shall be required for a soul.

There are others who deride religion for the sake of displaying their own imaginations, of following the fashion of a corrupt and licentious age, or gaining the friendship of the great, or the applause of the gay. How mean must that wretch be who can be overcome by such temptations as these! Yet there are men who sell that soul which God has formed for infinite felicity, defeat the great work of their redemption, and plunge into those pains which shall never end, lest they should lose the patronage of villains, and the praise of fools.

I suppose those, whom I am now speaking of, to be in themselves sufficiently convinced of the truth of the Scriptures, and may, therefore, very properly, lay before them the threatenings denounced by God against their conduct.

It may be useful to them to reflect betimes on the danger of "fearing man rather than God;" to consider that it shall avail a man nothing, if he "gain the whole world, and lose his own soul;" and that whoever "shall be ashamed of his Saviour before men, of him will his Saviour be ashamed before his Father which is in heaven."

That none of us may be in the number of those unhappy persons who thus scoff at the means of grace, and relinquish the hope of glory, may God, of his infinite mercy, grant, through the merits of that Saviour who hath brought life and immortality to light!

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SERMON XXI.

"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." PSALM cxlv. 9.

IN this devout, masterly, and useful performance, the author appears deeply sensible of the divine greatness, and peculiarly transported with contemplating God's infinite goodness; even to that degree, that he cheerfully engages in, and absolutely devotes himself to, the very important service of adoring and obeying this almighty, unbounded, and most benevolent Being.

This his religion, as he intimates, was founded upon the most solid ground of reason; for as the great Father and Lord of all is certainly matchless, and unrivalled in majesty and in power, so is he disinterested, wonderful, and glorious, in bounty and compassion; averse and slow to anger, but ready to receive, to favour and reward, all who diligently seek, and faithfully serve him. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

In discoursing upon this subject, I shall consider,

FIRST: Some arguments that support, or prove it.

SECONDLY: Illustrate its extensive signification and import in some remarkable instances, and conclude with a practical application.

FIRST: I am to consider some arguments that establish this sentiment.

Our great Lord and Master has taught us, that there is none good but one, that is God. By which expression we may understand, that there is none so perfectly disinterested, so diffusively, and so astonishingly good, as God is. For, in another place, he instructs us both how to comprehend, and rely on this unchangeable and never-failing attribute of the divine nature; resembling it to, or representing it by, a human quality or virtue, namely, the affection and tender regard of parents to their children.

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"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him." From whence it is obvious to remark, that as the humane and generous man has a peculiar tenderness for his more immediate descendants, and, proportionally to his power and influence, is willing and active to succour and relieve the indigent, to divide care, lessen misery, and diffuse happiness through the world; inconceivably more affectionate is the eternal Parent unto, and regardful of, all his intelligent creatures, truly disposed, according to their rank of existence, to promote their welfare; and beyond comprehension inclined to conduct them, through the greatest variety of circumstances, to the noblest perfection, and the highest degree of felicity. In his righteous and benevolent nature there cannot possibly be the most distant tendency to caprice, severity, or selfishness; for the multitude of sharers, he knows, can never subtract from his inexhaustible fulness. He created to communicate. In every evil which he prevents, he is pleased, and in all the good that he bestows, he glories. His goodness dictated the bestowing of existence, in all its forms, and with all its properties. His goodness displays itself in sustaining and disposing of all things. His goodness connects unnumbered worlds together in one spacious, vast, and unbounded universe, and embraces every system. "His tender mercies are over all his works."

Without goodness, what apprehensions could we entertain of all the other attributes of the Divine Being? Without the utmost extent of benevolence and mercy, they would hardly be perfections, or excellencies. And what would an universal administration produce, in the hands of an evil, or a partial, or malevolent direction, but scenes of horrour and devastation? Not affliction and punishment for the sake of discipline and correction, to prevent the offence, or reform the sinner; but heavy judgments and dreadful vengeance, to destroy him; or implacable wrath and fiery indignation, to prolong his misery, and

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extend the duration of his torture through the revolving periods of an endless eternity.

Without the most enlarged notions of an infinite and everlasting goodness in the Divine nature, an impenetrable gloom must hang over every mind, and darkness overspread the whole face of being. Neither could any other conceivable sentiment disperse our suspicions, or banish one of our guilty, or superstitious fears. For suppose he confined his goodness to a few, without any reasonable cause or just ground, and we could be so whimsically partial to ourselves, as to conceit that we were of this select number; yet there could be no security of happiness, not even to this little flock. He that chose them by chance, might as accidentally abandon them; and, as the former was without reason or goodness, the latter might be without righteousness or mercy. Therefore it is infinitely desirable to think, and we are confident of the truth of our idea, that "the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

For if he be self-existent, omnipotent, and possessed of perfect liberty; if it be impossible for him ever to err, or mistake, in what is good and fitting, and if he enjoys an infinite ability to effect, with a thought only, what shall always be for the greatest advantage, he must be originally and essentially, immutably and for ever good.

Holy Scripture, as if beauty and goodness were synonymous terms, or inseparable qualities, thus describes him, "How great is thy goodness! And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." And, as if glory and goodness signified the same thing, you find Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19, "And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory." To which the answer is, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." And when, as it is written in the next chapter, the Lord descended, and proclaimed his name, or published the attributes in which he is peculiarly delighted, what is this distinguishing name, or what these divine and glorious attributes? "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in good-

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ness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." The apostle sums up all these in one word, when he saith, "God is love." Which leads me to the second thing proposed,

Namely, to illustrate the extensive signification and import of this subject by some remarkable instances. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

No bounds can be fixed to the Divine presence, nor is any part of illimitable space without his inspection, and active influence. There is nothing remote, or obscure to him, nor any exceptions to his favour among all the works of his hands. Far and wide then as is the vast range of existence, so is the Divine benevolence extended; and both in the previous trial, and final retribution, of all his rational and moral productions, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

In the first place, to illustrate this, we need only to take a transient view of the outworks of the visible creation, a general survey of the nature and correspondence of the various parts of this regular and grand machine, this finished and stupendous fabrick, in which every thing is contrived and concluded for the best.

For do but imagine an appetite, or faculty, altered; or a change in the object prepared to gratify it, in any respect. Suppose a material alteration, or considerable difference in nature, and we shall easily perceive, it would be a manifold disadvantage, either to individuals, or to the whole. Suppose the earth otherwise than it is, or the atmosphere and surrounding air to be varied, and in any degree more rarefied or more condensed; suppose the element of water greatly increased, or considerably diminished; or the sun's blazing orb fixed nearer, and its vertical beams therefore stronger, or suppose it more remote, and its heat sensibly abated, the alteration would be a misfortune, if the difference did not terminate in misery and destruction. So that from the present adjustment, proportion, and accommodation of all matters in the wide

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creation, the consequence is fairly drawn, and very evident, that "God is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

This is certain of the whole of God's works, and is peculiarly apparent in man, the principal inhabitant of this earth. For, as his welfare, dignity, and satisfaction, nay his happiness, and even the end of his being, depend on, and arise from, his regularity and constancy in virtue, what an infinite concern hath the Deity expressed about it? What, that can consist with liberty, hath been omitted by supreme wisdom, in this most important affair? To incline him to be moderate in all his gratifications, true pleasure proceeds from nothing else. To keep off intemperate indulgence, and to guard him against all voluptuous excesses, it is so ordained, that extravagance and inconvenience are near together, and that vice and pain are, though not immediate and inseparable associates, never far asunder; and that it is impossible for that soul to be calm and at ease, which iniquity has stained, and which impenitent guilt corrodes.

The parts of man's body are wonderfully designed, and curiously constructed; regularly disposed of, and most accurately proportioned for the safety and advantage of the whole. As apt as we may be to quarrel with our nature, suppose an instinct was struck out of our frame, or a single passion taken from us; suppose our senses any ways altered, by being either strengthened, or impaired; or even reason refined and abstracted to such a degree as to render us wholly negligent of food and raiment, necessary exercises, and secular concerns; in any of these instances, the imaginary emendation would be a real deficiency, and a proportionable deduction from the moment and quantity of our happiness.

It is evidently the same with respect to all the other creatures we are acquainted with. Their nature and condition, their qualities and circumstances, are so adapted to one another, that, as the intellectual powers of a being of a more exalted nature would not probably suit an inha-

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bitant of this lower world, so neither would the capacities of human nature guide the fowls of the air, or conduct the beasts of the field, to so much happiness, as they find, by following the motions and impulses of sense and instinct. And if reflection, enlarged ideas, and moral discrimination, be denied them, it is plainly because they would be a burden and a misfortune, rather than a benefit to them.

But these universal notices, and undeniable testimonies of divine goodness, throughout the animated regions of earth, sea, and air, in the propriety and suitableness of creatures to their state, and objects to their appetites, are too evident and obvious to all men to need enlargement. God's works are all wonderful; and in wisdom, and with goodness, hath he made them.

SECONDLY: This attribute is likewise illustriously displayed in the divine providence and government of the creation, though our faculties are too limited and scanty, and our views too narrow and imperfect, to trace its secret and mysterious ways.

An omnipotent support, and a perfectly wise direction, are evident in the laws established, and regularly observed through all the divine productions in heaven above, or on the earth beneath. Neither have the most celebrated philosophers been able, with all their boasted sagacity, and after all their laborious researches into the volume of nature, to assign any other cause, but an invisible agency, and an immediate energy of providence, for mutual attraction in bodies, and the determination of all portions of matter to their centre; for the great strength of appetite, instinct, and sagacity, in animals; that the prevalence and continuance thereof should be so precisely and exactly commensurate to the occasions which require them, and that they should be no longer urgent, than for the time necessary, as in the affection for their young. All which do greatly illustrate the wisdom and goodness of God's administration, and superintending care.

Holy writ elegantly and emphatically describes the excellence of goodness in the Divine providence, in various

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places, particularly in this Psalm, of which my text is a part. "The eyes of all wait upon thee: thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desires of every living thing. Behold" saith our blessed Saviour, "the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Not one individual can be so minute and inconsiderable as to escape the notice of Heaven's all-surveying eye; nor one so importantly large, and seemingly self-sufficient, as to subsist a moment without the Divine support. By him all things consist: "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works."

But man appears the distinguished charge of the beneficent Creator; and unless providence had connected rational beings by the peculiar strong ties of mutual obligation, perpetual dependency, and inseparable interest, they would, of all creatures, be the most destitute and miserable; for there is not one that in the first stages of its existence is so totally helpless, and absolutely insufficient for its own preservation, support, or defence, as man. Therefore parental tenderness is both early and passionate, permanent and lasting. Our social dispositions and affections are enlarged to the utmost limits, and continue with us in the concluding decays, and last end of this mortal life; that we may always love one another, and glorify "the Lord who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works."

The consequences, in the last place, which result from the arguments you have heard, are so obvious, that I make no doubt but your own thoughts have already anticipated them. Ingratitude among men hath in every age, and every region of the earth, been an object of general detestation, and universally accounted a glaring indication of depravity of heart. If the case stand thus among mortals,

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whose common interests require a reciprocation of kindness and beneficence, how greatly is the crime aggravated, when it is committed against that Being, whose goodness towards the sons of men is perfectly disinterested! The exertions of Divine providence in our behalf tend solely to our own welfare; nor can any thing we do in return contribute, in the smallest degree, to the augmentation of the happiness of the Almighty Benefactor. This unquestionably ought to be sufficient to exact from us the most profound veneration, the most fervent gratitude, and implicit obedience to his sacred laws.

David, after having enumerated the tender mercies of God, is penetrated with the strongest sense of devotion. "My mouth," he exclaims, "shall speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever." Such was the tribute which the royal psalmist thought due to the Deity for the creation and preservation of man. The debt is accumulated to us in an infinite proportion; for while we are bounden to the same return for the same benefits voluntarily conferred upon us, a grander obligation is superadded to that for the "means of grace, and for the hope of glory." Were the mercies of the Lord limited to the tenure of our present existence, great and glorious as they are, the human mind would be clouded by the consciousness that a very few years must exclude us for ever from the participation of them. But since the gracious rays of life and immortality have dissipated the gloom that hung upon futurity, since, by the propitiatory sacrifice of the Son of God, death is disarmed of his sting, and the grave deprived of its victory, Divine goodness hath received its perfect consummation.

If gratitude, praise, and adoration, therefore, be due to the Author of our being for those blessings which we enjoy at present, it is no less our highest interest so to use them in this previous state of trial, that we may finally exchange them for those purer and incorruptible treasures reserved for the righteous in the kingdom of heaven.

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Which that we may all do, may that God who created and preserves us, grant, through the merits and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

SERMON XXII.

"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." 1 Cor. xi. 29.

The celebration of the sacrament is generally acknowledged, by the Christian church, to be the highest act of devotion, and the most solemn part of positive religion, and has, therefore, most engaged the attention of those, who either profess to teach the way to happiness, or endeavour to learn it, and, like all other subjects, frequently discussed by men of various interests, dispositions, and capacities, has given rise to various opinions, widely different from each other.

Such is the weakness of mankind, that one errour, whether admitted, or detected, is very often the cause of another. Those who reject any opinion, however justly, are commonly incited by their zeal to condemn every position, in which they discover any affinity with the tenets which they oppose, of which they have been long accustomed to show the falsehood and the danger, and, therefore, imagine themselves nearer to truth and safety, in proportion as they recede from them. For this reason it sometimes happens that in passionate contests, and disputations long continued, each controvertist succeeds in the confutation of his adversary's positions, and each fails in the establishment of his own.

In this manner have writers, of different persuasions, treated on the worthiness required of those who partake

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of the Lord's supper; a quality, not only necessary to procure the favour of God, and to give efficacy to the institution, but so strictly enjoined in the words of the text, that to approach the holy table without it, is to pervert the means of salvation, and to turn prayer into sin.

The ardour and vehemence with which those are condemned who eat and drink unworthily, have filled the melancholy, the timorous, and the humble, with unnecessary terrours, which have been sometimes so much increased by the injudicious zeal of writers, erroneously pious, that they have conceived the danger of attempting to obey this precept of our Saviour more formidable than that of neglecting it, and have spent the greatest part of their lives in the omission of a duty of the highest importance; or, being equally terrified on either hand, have lived in anguish and perplexity, under a constant sense of the necessity of doing what they cannot, in their opinion, do in an acceptable manner, and which, of course, they shall either do, or omit, at the utmost hazard of eternal happiness.

Such exalted piety, such unshaken virtue, such an uniform ardour of divine affections, and such a constant practice of religious duties, have been represented as so indispensably necessary to a worthy reception of this sacrament, as few men have been able to discover in those whom they most esteem for their purity of life, and which no man's conscience will, perhaps, suffer him to find in himself; and, therefore, those who know themselves not to have arrived at such elevated excellence, who struggle with passions which they cannot wholly conquer, and bewail infirmities, which yet they perceive to adhere to them, are frighted from an act of devotion, of which they have been taught to believe, that it is so scarcely to be performed worthily by an embodied spirit that it requires the holiness of angels, and the uncontaminated raptures of paradise.

Thus it appeared, that, instead of being excited to ar-

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dent desires of perfection, and unwearied endeavours after the utmost height of sanctity, not only the sensual and the profligate were hardened in their wickedness, by conceiving a life of piety too hard to be borne, but the diffident and scrupulous were terrified into despair, considered vigilance and caution as unavailing fatigues, remitted their ardour, relaxed their diligence, and ceased to pursue what they could no longer hope to attain.

To remove these doubts, and disperse these apprehensions, doctrines of very different tendency have been industriously promoted; lower degrees of piety have been declared sufficient, and the dangers of reception have been extenuated; nor have any arts of interpretation been untried, or any conjecture, which sagacity or learning could produce, been forgotten, to assign to the words of the text a sense less to be dreaded by the unworthy communicant. But by these opinions, imprudently inculcated, many have been misled to consider the sacrament as little more than a cursory act of devotion; the exhortations of the apostle have lost their efficacy, and the terrours of the Lord, with which he enforces them, have no longer repressed the licentiousness of the profligate, or disturbed the indolence of the supine. Religion has sunk into ceremony; God has, without fear, been approached with the lips, when the heart has been far from him; and the supper of the Lord has been frequented by those, of whom it could not be perceived, that they were very solicitous to avoid the guilt of unworthy communication.

Thus have different interpretations of the same text produced errours equally dangerous, and which might have been equally obviated, by a careful attention to the nature and institution of the sacrament, an unprejudiced examination of the position of the apostle, and the comparison of this passage with other comminations; methods of inquiry, which, in the explication of doubtful texts of Scripture, ought always to be observed, and by which it may be proved, to the comfort of the depressed, and the confirmation of the doubtful, that the sin of unworthy re-

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ception, though great, is yet to be pardoned; and to the restraint of the presumptuous, and confusion of the profane, that the preparation required is strict, though practicable, and the denunciation such as ought to terrify the negligent, though not discourage the pious.

When eternal punishments are denounced against any crime, it is always evidently the intention of the writer to declare and enforce to those, that are yet innocent, the duty of avoiding them, and to those, who have already committed them, the necessity of repentance, reformation, and future caution. For it is not the will of God, that any should perish, but that all should repent, and be saved. It is not by one act of wickedness, that infinite mercy will be kindled to everlasting anger, and the beneficent Father of the universe for ever alienated from his creatures; but by a long course of crimes, deliberately committed against the convictions of conscience, and the admonitions of grace; by a life spent in guilt, and concluded without repentance. "No drunkard or extortioner," says the apostle, "shall inherit eternal life." Yet shall no man be excluded from future happiness, by a single instance, or even by long habits of intemperance, or extortion. Repentance and new life will efface his crimes, reinstate him in the favour of his Judge, restore him to those promises which he has forfeited, and open the paths to eternal happines.

Such is the crime of unworthy reception of the holy sacrament, by which "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself;" to which no man can come unprepared, or partake of, if he is divested of the intentions suitable to so solemn a part of divine worship, without adding to the number of his sins, and, by a necessary consequence, to the danger of his soul. But though the soul is, by such an act of wickedness, endangered, it is not necessarily destroyed, or irreversibly condemned. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, contributes, indeed, by eating and drinking, to his own damnation, as he that engages in fraudulent, or

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unlawful commerce, may be said, with great propriety, to traffick for damnation, or to set his soul to sale; yet as it is certain, that fraud is not unpardonable, if it shall afterwards give way to justice, so neither is the profanation of the sacrament a crime, which the goodness of God cannot forgive, if it be succeeded by true devotion. The whole life of man is a state of probation; he is always in danger, and may be always in hope. As no short fervours of piety, nor particular acts of beneficence, however exalted, can secure him from the possibility of sinking into wickedness, so no neglect of devotion, nor the commission of any crimes, can preclude the means of grace, or the hope of glory. He that has eaten and drunk unworthily may enter into salvation, by repentance and amendment; as he that has eaten and drunk worthily may, by negligence or presumption, perish everlastingly.

This account of the guilt of unworthy reception makes it necessary to inquire, whether by the original word in the text be meant, as it is translated, *damnation*, the eternal punishments of a future state; or, as it is more frequently interpreted, condemnation, temporary judgments, or worldly afflictions. For, from either sense, the enormity of the crime, and the anger of God enkindled by it, is sufficiently apparent. Every act of wickedness that is punished with immediate vengeance, will, if it be aggravated by repetitions, or not expiated by repentance, incur final condemnation; for temporal punishments are the merciful admonitions of God, to avoid, by a timely change of conduct, that state in which there is no repentance, and those pains which can have no end. So that the confident and presumptuous, though it should be allowed that only temporal punishments are threatened in the text, are to remember, that, without reformation, they will be only aggravations of the crime, and that, at the last day, those who could not be awakened to a just reverence of this divine institution, will be deprived of the benefits of that death, of which it was established as a perpetual commemoration. And those who are depressed

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by unnecessary terrours, may repel any temptations to despondency, by considering, that the crime of unworthy communication is, like all others, only unpardoned, where it is unrepented.

Having thus shown the danger incurred by an unworthy reception of the sacrament, it is necessary to inquire how it may be avoided, and to consider,

FIRST: What it is to eat and drink unworthily.

SECONDLY: By what means a man may become a worthy partaker of the Lord's supper.

FIRST: I am to consider what it is to eat and drink unworthily.

The unworthiness with which the Corinthians are upbraided by the apostle, was, in part, such as the present regulated establishment of Christianity, and the assistance which religion receives from the civil power, make it unnecessary to censure, since it is not now committed even by the most presumptuous, negligent, or profane. It was a practice amongst them to assemble at the holy table in a tumultuous manner, and to celebrate the eucharist with indecency and riot. But though such open profanation of this sacred ordinance is not now to be apprehended, and, therefore, no man needs to be cautioned against it, yet the cause which produced it is such, as we cannot too anxiously fear, or too diligently avoid; for its influences are various and extensive, and often weaken the efficacy of the sacrament, though they produce no apparent disorders in the celebration of it.

The Corinthians fell into this enormous sin, says the apostle, "not discerning the Lord's body," for want of discerning the importance and sanctity of the institution, and of distinguishing the Lord's body from the common elements of bread and wine, exhibited on common occasions of festive jollity. It is, therefore, the first duty of every Christian to discern the Lord's body, or to impress upon his mind a just idea of this act of commemoration, of the commands by which it is enforced, of the great sacrifice which it represents, and of the benefits which it

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produces. Without these reflections, often repeated, and made habitual by long and fervent meditation, every one will be in danger of eating and drinking unworthily, of receiving the sacrament without sufficient veneration, without that ardent gratitude for the death of Christ, and that steady confidence in his merits, by which the sacrament is made efficacious to his salvation; for of what use can it be to commemorate the death of the Redeemer of mankind without faith, and without thankfulness? Such a celebration of the sacrament is nothing less than a mockery of God, an act by which we "approach him with our lips, when our hearts are far from him;" and as such insincerity and negligence cannot but be, in a very high degree, criminal; as he that eateth and drinketh thus unworthily cannot but promote his own damnation, it is necessary to inquire,

SECONDLY: By what means a man may become a worthy partaker of the Lord's supper.

The method by which we are directed by the apostle to prepare ourselves for the sacrament, is that of self-examination, which implies a careful regulation of our lives by the rules of the gospel; for to what purpose is our conduct to be examined, but that it may be amended, where it appears erroneous and defective? The duty of examination, therefore, is only mentioned, and repentance and reformation are supposed, with great reason, inseparable from it; for nothing is more evident, than that we are to inquire into the state of our souls, as into affairs of less importance, with a view to avoid danger, or to secure happiness. When we inquire with regard to our faith, whether it be sufficiently vigorous or powerful, whether it regularly influences our conduct, restrains our passions, and moderates our desires; what is intended by the duty, but that if we find ourselves Christians only in name, if we discover that the example of our Divine Master has little force upon our constant conversation, and that God is seldom in our thoughts, except in the solemn acts of stated worship, we must then endeavour

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to invigorate our faith by returning frequently to meditate upon the objects of it, our creation, our redemption, the means of grace and the hope of glory; and to enlighten our understandings, and awaken our affections, by the perusal of writings of piety, and, above all, of the Holy Scriptures.

If any man in his examination of life, discovers that he has been guilty of fraud, extortion, or injury to his neighbour, he is to make reparation to his utmost power. If he finds malice or hatred lurking in his mind, he must expel them by a strong resolution never to comply with their motions, or to suffer them to break out in any real act of revenge. If he observes that he is often betrayed, by passions, or appetites, into unlawful methods of gratifying them, he must resolve to restrain them for the future, by watching and fasting, by a steady temperance and perpetual vigilance.

But let him beware of vain confidence in his own firmness, and implore, by fervent and sincere prayer, the cooperation of God's grace with his endeavours; for by grace alone can we hope to resist the numberless temptations that perpetually surround us; by grace only can we reject the solicitations of pleasure, repress the motions of anger, and turn away from the allurements of ambition. And this grace, when sincerely implored, is always granted in a degree sufficient for our salvation; and it ought, therefore, to be one of the first parts of our preparation for the sacrament, to press for that grace, without which our examination itself will be useless, because, without it no pious resolution can be formed, nor any virtue be practised.

As therefore, it is only by an habitual and unrepented unworthiness that damnation is incurred, let no man be harassed with despondency for any past irreverence or coldness! As the sacrament was instituted for one of the means of grace, let no one, who sincerely desires the salvation of his own soul, neglect to receive it; and as eternal punishment is denounced by the apostle against

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all those who receive it unworthily, let no man approach the table of the Lord, without repentance of his former sins, stedfast purposes of a new life, and full confidence in his merits, whose death is represented by it.

SERMON XXIII.

[PREACHED ON THE THIRTIETH OF JANUARY.]

"Where envying and strife is, there is confusion." JAMES iii. 16.

THAT the life of man is unhappy, that his days are not only few, but evil, that he is surrounded by dangers, distracted by uncertainties, and oppressed by calamities, requires no proof. This is a truth, which every man confesses, or which he that denies it, denies it against conviction. Accordingly we find the miseries of our present state lamented by writers of every class, from the inspired teachers of religion, who admonish us of our frailty and infelicity, that they may incite us to labour after a better state, where "there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore," to the vainest and loosest author, whose design is to teach methods, not of improving, but of wasting time, and whose doctrine St. Paul, speaking in a borrowed character, has well expressed in one short sentence, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

When such is the condition of beings, not brute and savage, but endowed with reason, and united in society, who would not expect that they should join in a perpetual confederacy against the certain, or fortuitous, troubles to which they are exposed? that they should universally cooperate in the proportion of universal felicity? that every man should easily discover that his own happiness is connected with that of every other man? that thousands and millions should continue together, as partakers of one common nature? and that every eye should be vigilant,

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and every hand active, for the confirmation of ease, and the prevention of misfortune?

This expectation might be formed by speculative wisdom, but experience will soon dissipate the pleasing illusion. A slight survey of life will show that, instead of hoping to be happy in the general felicity, every man pursues a private and independent interest, proposes to himself some peculiar convenience, and prizes it more, as it is less attainable by others.

When the ties of society are thus broken, and the general good of mankind is subdivided into the separate advantages of individuals, it must necessarily happen, that many will desire what few can possess, and consequently, that some will be fortunate by the disappointment, or defeat, of others, and, since no man suffers disappointment without pain, that one must become miserable by another's happiness.

This is, however, the natural condition of human life. As it is not possible for a being, necessitous and insufficient as man, to act wholly without regard to his interest, so it is difficult for him to place his interest at such a distance from him, as to act with constant and uniform diligence, in hopes only of happiness flowing back upon him in its circulation through a whole community, to seek his own good, only by seeking the good of all others, of many whom he cannot know, and of many whom he cannot love. Such a diffusion of interest, such sublimation of self-love, is to all difficult, because it so places the end at a great distance from the endeavour; it is to many impossible, because to many the end, thus removed, will be out of sight. And so great are the numbers of those whose views either nature has bounded, or corruption has contracted, that whoever labours only for the publick will soon be left to labour alone, and driven from his attention to the universe, which his single care will very little benefit, to the inspection of his own business, and the prosecution of his private wishes. Every man has, in the present state of things, wants which cannot

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wait for publick plenty, and vexations which must be quieted before the days of universal peace. And no man can live only for others, unless he could persuade others to live only for him.

The misery of the world, therefore, so far as it arises from inequality of conditions, is incurable. These are desires, which almost all feel, but which all cannot gratify. Every man may, without a crime, study his own happiness, if he be careful not to impede, by design, the happiness of others. In the race of life, some must gain the prize, and others must lose it; but the prize is honestly gained by him who outruns his competitor, without endeavouring to overthrow him.

In the prosecution of private interest, which providence has either ordained, or permitted, there must necessarily be some kind of strife. Where blessings are thrown before us, as the reward of industry, there must be a constant struggle of emulation. But this strife would be without confusion, if it were regulated by reason and religion, if men would endeavour after lawful ends by lawful means.

But as there is a laudable desire of meliorating the condition of life which communities may not only allow, but encourage, as the parent of useful arts, by which first necessity was supplied, and conveniencies will always be multiplied; as there is likewise an honest contention for preference and superiority, by which the powers of greater minds are pushed into action, and the ancient boundaries of science are overpast; so there is likewise a strife, of a pernicious and destructive kind, which daily disturbs the quiet of individuals, and too frequently obstructs, or disturbs, the happiness of nations; a strife which always terminates in confusion, and which it is, therefore, every man's duty to avoid himself, and every man's interest to repress in others.

This strife, of which cometh confusion, the apostle has, in his prohibition, joined with envying. And daily experience will prove, that he has joined them with great pro-

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priety; for, perhaps, there has seldom been any great and lasting strife in the world, of which envy was not either the original motive, or the most forcible incentive. The ravages of religious enthusiasts, and the wars kindled by difference of opinions, may, perhaps, be considered as calamities, which cannot properly be imputed to envy; yet even these may often be justly suspected of arising from no higher or nobler causes. A man convinced of the truth of his own tenets, wishing the happiness of others, and considering happiness as the certain consequence of truth, is necessarily prompted to extend his opinions, and to fill the world with proselytes. But surely pure zeal cannot carry him beyond warm dispute, and earnest exhortation; because by dispute and exhortation alone can real proselytes be made. Violence may extort confession from the tongue, but the mind must remain unchanged. Opinion, whether false or true, whether founded on evidence, or raised by prejudice, stands equally unshaken in the tempests of commotion, and sets at defiance the flames of hostility, and the sword of persecution.

No man, whose reason is not darkened by some inordinate perturbation of mind, can possibly judge so absurdly of beings, partakers of the same nature with himself, as to imagine that any opinion can be recommended by cruelty and mischief, or that he, who cannot perceive the force of argument, will be more efficaciously instructed by penalties and tortures. The power of punishment is to silence, not to confute. It, therefore, can never serve for the effectual propagation, or obstruction, of doctrines. It may, indeed, sometimes hinder the dissemination of falsehood, and check the progress of errour, but can never promote the reception of truth.

Whenever, therefore, we find the teacher jealous of the honour of his sect, and apparently more solicitous to see his opinions established than approved, we may conclude that he has added envy to his zeal; and that he feels more pain from the want of victory, than pleasure from the enjoyment of truth.

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It is the present mode of speculation to charge these men with total hypocrisy, as wretches who have no other design but that of temporal advancement, and consider religion only as one of the means by which power is gained, or wealth accumulated. But this charge, whatever may have been the depravity of single persons, is by no means generally true. The persecutor and enthusiast have often been superiour to the desire of worldly possessions, or, at least have been abstracted from it by stonger passions. There is a kind of mercantile speculation, which ascribes every action to interest, and considers interest as only another name for pecuniary advantage. But the boundless variety of human affections is not to be thus easily circumscribed. Causes and effects, motives and actions, are complicated and diversified without end. Many men make party subservient to personal purposes; and many likewise suffer all private considerations to be absorbed and lost in their zeal for some publick cause. But envy still operates, however various in its appearance, however disguised by specious pretences, or however removed from notice by intermediate causes. All violence, beyond the necessity of self-defence, is incited by the desire of humbling the opponent, and, whenever it is applied to the decision of religious questions, aims at conquest, rather than conversion.

Since, therefore, envy is found to operate so often, and so secretly, and the strife which arises from it is certain to end in confusion, it is surely the duty of every man, who desires the prosperity of his country, as connected with a particular community, or the general happiness of the world, as allied to general humanity,

FIRST: To consider, by what tokens he may discover in himself, or others, that strife which springs from envy, and ends in confusion.

SECONDLY: What are the evils produced by that confusion which proceeds from strife.

FIRST: Let us consider, by what tokens we may dis-

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cover in ourselves, or others, that strife which springs from envy, and ends in confusion.

That strife may well be supposed to proceed from some corrupt passion, which is carried on with vehemence disproportioned to the importance of the end openly proposed. Men naturally value ease and tranquillity at a very high rate, and will not, on very small causes, either suffer labour, or excite opposition. When, therefore, any man voluntarily engages in tasks of difficulty, and incurs danger, or suffers hardships, it must be imagined that he proposes to himself some reward, more than equivalent to the comforts which he thus resigns, and of which he seems to triumph in the resignation; and if it cannot be found that his labours tend to the advancement of some end, worthy of so much assiduity, he may justly be supposed to have formed to himself some imaginary interest, and to seek his gratification, not in that which he himself gains, but which another loses.

It is a token that strife proceeds from unlawful motives, when it is prosecuted by unlawful means. He that seeks only the right, and only for the sake of right, will not easily suffer himself to be transported beyond the just and allowed methods of attaining it. To do evil that good may come, can never be the purpose of a man who has not perverted his morality by some false principle; and false principles are not so often collected by the judgment, as snatched up by the passions. The man whose duty gives way to his convenience, who, when once he has fixed his eye upon a distant end, hastens to it by violence over forbidden ground, or creeps on towards it through the crooked paths of fraud and stratagem, as he has evidently some other guide than the word of God, must be supposed to have likewise some other purpose than the glory of God, or the benefit of man.

The evidence of corrupt designs is much strengthened, when unlawful means are used, in preference to those which are recommended by reason, and warranted by justice.

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When that which would have been granted to request, or yielded to remonstrance, is wantonly seized by sudden violence, it is apparent that violence is chosen for its own sake, and that the claimant pleases himself, not with the possession, but the power by which it was gained, and the mortification of him, to whom his superiority has not allowed the happiness of choice, but has at once taken from him the honour of keeping, and the credit of resigning.

There is another token that strife is produced by the predominance of some vitious passion, when it is carried on against natural or legal superiority. This token, though, perhaps, it is not very frequently fallacious, is not equally certain with the former; because that superiority which nature gives, or institutions establish, too frequently incites insolence, or oppression; such insolence as may justly be restrained, and such oppression as may be lawfully resisted. Many modes of tyranny have been practised in the world, of which it is more natural to ask, with wonder, why they were submitted to so long, than why they were at last opposed and quelled. But if history and experience inform us that power and greatness grow wanton and licentious, that wealth and prosperity elate the mind, and enslave the understanding to desire, and when men once find that no one has power to control them, they are seldom very attentive to justice, or very careful to control themselves; history and experience will likewise show us, that the contrary condition has its temptations and its crimes, that he, who considers himself as subject to another, and liable to suffer by caprice or wickedness, often anticipates the evils of his state, imagines himself to feel what he only fears, and imputes every failure of negligence, or start of passion, to studied tyranny and settled malevolence. To be inferiour is necessarily unpleasing; to be placed in a state of inferiority to those who have no eminent abilities, or transcendent merit, (which must happen in all political constitutions,) increases the uneasiness; and every man finds in himself a strong inclination to

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throw down from their elevated state those whom he obeys without approbation, whom he reverences without esteem. When the passions are once in motion, they are not easily appeased, or checked. He that has once concluded it lawful to resist power, when it wants merit, will soon find a want of merit, to justify his resistance of power.

Thus, if we consider the conduct of individuals towards each other, we shall commonly find the labourer murmuring at him who seems to live by easier means. We shall hear the poor repining that others are rich, and even the rich speaking with malignity of those who are still richer than themselves.

And if we survey the condition of kingdoms and commonwealths, it will always be observed, that governours are censured, that every mischief of chance is imputed to ill designs, and that nothing can persuade mankind, that they are not injured by an administration, either unskilful, or corrupt. It is very difficult always to do right. To seem always to do right to those who desire to discover wrong, is scarcely possible. Every man is ready to form expectations in his own favour, such as never can be gratified, and which will yet raise complaints, if they are disappointed.

Such is commonly the disposition with which men look upon those who are placed above them, and with such dispositions we cannot hope that they should be often pleased. Life is a state of imperfection; and yet every man exacts from his superiours consummate wisdom, and unfailing virtue, and, whenever he sees, or believes himself to see, either vice or errour, thinks himself at liberty to loosen the ties of duty, and pass the boundaries of subordination, without considering that of such strife there must come confusion, or without knowing, what we shall consider,

SECONDLY: The evils and mischiefs produced by that confusion which arises from strife.

That the destruction of order, and the abolition of stated regulations, must fill the world with uncertainty, distraction, and solicitude, is apparent without any long deduc-

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tion of argument. Yet it has too frequently happened, that those who either feel their wishes restrained, see their fortunes wearing away, or imagine their merit neglected, and their abilities employed upon business unworthy of their attention, desire times of tumult and disturbance, as affording the fairest opportunities for the active and sagacious to distinguish themselves, and as throwing open the avenues of wealth and honour, to be entered by those who have the greatest quickness of discernment, and celerity of dispatch. In times of peace every thing proceeds in a train of regularity, and there is no sudden advantage to be snatched, nor any unusual change of condition to be hoped. But when sedition and uproar have once silenced law, and confounded property, then is the hour when chance begins to predominate in the world, when every man may hope without bounds, and those who know how to improve the lucky moment, may gain in a day what no length of labour could have procured, without the concurrence of casual advantage.

This is the expectation which makes some hasten on confusion, and others look with concern at its approach. But what is this other than gaining by universal misery, supplying by force the want of right, and rising to sudden elevation, by a sudden downfal of others?

The great benefit of society is that the weak are protected against the strong. The great evil of confusion is that the world is thrown into the hands, not of the best, but of the strongest; that all certainty of possession or acquisition is destroyed; that every man's care is confined to his own interest; and that general negligence of the general good makes way for general licentiousness.

Of the strife, which this day brings back to our remembrance, we may observe, that it had all the tokens of strife proceeding from envy. The rage of the faction which invaded the rights of the church and monarchy, was disproportionate to the provocation received. The violence with which hostility was prosecuted, was more than the cause, that was publickly avowed, could incite or

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justify. Personal resentment was apparent in the persecution of particular men, and the bitterness of faction broke out in all the debates upon publick questions. No securities could quiet suspicion, no concessions could satisfy exorbitance. Usurpation was added to usurpation; demand was accumulated on demand; and, when war had decided against loyalty, insult was added to insult, and exaction to exaction.

As the end was unjust, the means likewise were illegal. The power of the faction commenced by clamour, was promoted by rebellion, and established by murder; by murder of the most atrocious kind, deliberate, contumelious, and cruel; by murder, not necessary even to the safety of those by whom it was committed, but chosen in preference to any other expedient for security.

This war certainly did not want the third token of strife proceeding from envy. It was a war of the rabble against their superiours; a war, in which the lowest and basest of the people were encouraged by men a little higher than themselves, to lift their hands against their ecclesiastical and civil governours, and by which those who were grown impatient of obedience, endeavoured to obtain the power of commanding.

This strife, as we all know, ended in confusion. Our laws were overruled, our rights were abolished. The soldier seized upon the property, the fanatick rushed into the church. The usurpers gave way to other usurpers; the schismaticks were thrust out by other schismaticks; the people felt nothing from their masters but alternatives of oppression, and heard nothing from their teachers but varieties of errour.

Such was the strife, and such was the confusion. Such are the evils which God sometimes permits to fall upon nations, when they stand secure in their own greatness, and forget their dependence on universal sovereignty, depart from the laws of their Maker, corrupt the purity of his worship, or swerve from the truth of his revelation. Such evils surely we have too much reason to fear again,

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for we have no right to charge our ancestors with having provoked them by crimes greater than our own.

Let us, therefore, be warned by the calamities of past ages; and those miseries which are due to our sins, let us avert by our penitence. "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon."

SERMON XXIV.

"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice." PROV. xxix. 2.

THAT the institutions of government owe their original, like other human actions, to the desire of happiness, is not to be denied; nor is it less generally allowed, that they have been perverted to very different ends from those which they were intended to promote. This is a truth, which it would be very superfluous to prove by authorities, or illustrate by examples. Every page of history, whether sacred or profane, will furnish us abundantly with instances of rulers that have deviated from justice, and subjects that have forgotten their allegiance; of nations ruined by the tyranny of governours, and of governours overborne by the madness of the populace. Instead of a concurrence between governour and subjects for their mutual advantage, they seem to have considered each other, not as allies or friends, to be aided or supported, but as enemies, whose prosperity was inconsistent with their own, and who were, therefore, to be subdued by open force, or subjected by secret stratagems.

Thus have slavery and licentiousness succeeded one another, and anarchy and despotick power alternately prevailed. Virtue has, at one time, stood exposed to the punishments of vice; and vice, at another time, enjoyed

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the security and privileges of virtue. Nor have communities suffered more, when they were exposed to the passions and caprices of one man, however cruel, ambitious, or insolent, than when all restraint has been taken off the actions of men by publick confusions, and every one left at full liberty to indulge his own desires, and comply, without fear of punishment, with his wildest imaginations.

Man is, for the most part, equally unhappy, when subjected, without redress, to the passions of another, or left, without control, to the dominion of his own. This every man, however unwilling he may be to own it of himself, will very readily acknowledge of his neighbour. No man knows any one, except himself, whom he judges fit to be set free from the coercion of laws, and to be abandoned entirely to his own choice. By this consideration have all civilized nations been induced to the enactions of penal laws, laws by which every man's danger becomes every man's safety, and by which, though all are restrained, yet all are benefited.

Government is, therefore, necessary, in the opinion of every one, to the safety of particular men, and the happiness of society; and it may be considered as a maxim universally admitted, that "the people cannot rejoice, except the righteous are in authority;" that no publick prosperity, or private quiet, can be hoped for, but from the justice and wisdom of those, to whom the administration of affairs, and the execution of the laws, is committed. For corrupt governments operate, with equal force and efficacy, to the destruction of a people, as good governments to their preservation.

But that authority may never swell into tyranny, or languish into supineness, and that subjection may never degenerate into slavery, nor freedom kindle into rebellion, it may be proper, both for those who are entrusted with power, and those from whom obedience is required, to consider,

First: How much it is the duty of those in authority to promote the happiness of the people.

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SECONDLY: By what means the happiness of the people may be most effectually promoted.

THIRDLY: How the people are to assist and further the endeavours of their governours.

FIRST: How much it is the duty of those in authority to promote the happiness of the people.

If it be true in general that no man is born merely for his own sake, to consult his own advantage or pleasure, unconnected with the good of others; it is yet more evidently true of those who are exalted into high rank, dignified with honours, and vested with authority. Their superiority is not to be considered as a sanction for laziness, or a privilege for vice. They are not to conceive, that their passions are to be allowed a wider range, or their appetites set more free from subjection to reason, than those of others. They are not to consult their own glory, at the expense of the lives of others; or to gratify their avarice, by plundering those whom diligence and labour have entitled to affluence. They are not to conceive that power gives a right to oppress, and to punish those who murmur at oppression. They are to look upon their power, and their greatness, as instruments placed in their hands, to be employed for the publick advantage. They are to remember they are placed upon an eminence, that their examples may be more conspicuous, and that, therefore, they must take care, lest they teach those vices which they ought to suppress. They must reflect, that it is their duty to secure property from the attempts of rapine and robbery, and that those whom they protect will be very little benefited by their care, if what they rescue from others they take away themselves.

It appears from those struggles for dominion, which have filled the world with war, bloodshed, and desolation, and have torn in pieces almost all the states and kingdoms of the earth, and from those daily contests for subordinate authority, which disturb the quiet of smaller societies, that there is somewhat in power more pleasing than in any other enjoyment; and, consequently, to be-

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stow upon man the happiness of ruling others, is to bestow upon him the greatest benefit he is capable of receiving. Nothing then can equal the obligation of governours to the people, and nothing but the most flagrant ingratitude can make them careless of the interests, or unconcerned at the misfortunes, of those to whom they owe that, for which no danger has been thought too dreadful to be encountered, no labour too tedious to be undergone, and no crime too horrible to be committed.

Gratitude is a species of justice. He that requites a benefit may be said, in some sense, to pay a debt; and, of course, he that forgets favours received may be accused of neglecting to pay what he cannot be denied to owe. But this is not the only sense in which justice may be said to require from the governour an attention to the wants and petitions of the people. He that engages in the management of publick business, takes a trust upon him, which it was in his power to decline, and which he is, therefore, bound to discharge with diligence and fidelity; a trust which is of the highest honour, because it is of the greatest difficulty and importance, a trust which includes, not only the care of the property, but the morals of the people.

It is with the justest reason, that large revenues, pompous titles, and all that contributes to the happiness of life, are annexed to these high offices; for what reward can be too great for him, to whom multitudes are indebted for the secure enjoyment of their possessions? for him, whose authority checks the progress of vice, and assists the advancement of virtue, restrains the violence of the oppressour, and asserts the cause of the injured? These are, doubtless, merits above the common rate, merits which can hardly be too loudly celebrated, or too liberally rewarded.

But it is always to be observed, that he only deserves the recompense, who performs the work for which it is proposed; and that he who wears the honours, and receives the revenues, of an exalted nation, without attend-

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ing to the duties of his post, is, in a very high degree, criminal, both in the eye of God and man.

It is, therefore, the certain and apparent duty of those that are in authority, to take care that the people may rejoice, and diligently to inquire, what is to be considered,

SECONDLY: By what means the happiness of the people may be most effectually promoted.

In political, as well as natural disorders, the greater errour of those who commonly undertake, either cure or preservation, is, that they rest in second causes, without extending their search to the remote and original sources of evil. They, therefore, obviate the immediate evil, but leave the destructive principle to operate again; and have their work for ever to begin, like the husbandman who mows down the heads of noisome weeds, instead of pulling up the roots.

The only uniform and perpetual cause of publick happiness is publick virtue. The effects of all other things which are considered as advantages, will be found casual and transitory. Without virtue nothing can be securely possessed, or properly enjoyed.

In a country like ours, the great demand, which is for ever repeated to our governours, is for the security of property, the confirmation of liberty, and the extension of commerce. All this we have obtained, and all this we possess, in a degree which, perhaps, was never granted to any other people. Yet we still find something wanting to our happiness, and turn ourselves round on all sides, with perpetual restlessness, to find that remedy for our evils which neither power nor policy can afford.

That established property and inviolable freedom are the greatest of political felicities, no man can be supposed likely to deny. To depend on the will of another, to labour for that, of which arbitrary power can prohibit the enjoyment, is the state to which want of reason has subjected the brute. To be happy we must know our own rights; and we must know them to be safe.

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But though this knowledge be necessary to happiness, this knowledge is not sufficient. Liberty, if not regulated by virtue, can be only license to do evil; and property, if not virtuously enjoyed, can only corrupt the possessour, and give him the power to injure others. Trade may make us rich; but riches, without goodness, cannot make us happy.

Let us, however, suppose that these external goods have that power which wisdom cannot believe, and which experience never could confirm; let us suppose that riches and liberty could make us happy. It then remains to be considered how riches and liberty can be secured. To this the politician has a ready answer, that they are to be secured by laws wisely formed, and vigorously executed. But, as laws can be made only by a small part of an extensive empire, and must be executed by a part yet far smaller, what shall protect us against the laws themselves? And how shall we be certain, that they shall not be made without regard to the publick good, or shall not be perverted to oppression by the ministers of justice?

But if prosperity, and laws, by which, as far as the mutability of this world permits, that prosperity is made permanent and safe, cannot make the people happy, what is it the governours can do? How far is their care to be extended, and what more can skill and vigilance perform? The wisdom of mankind has been exercised in inquiries how riches may be gained and kept; how the different claims of men may be adjusted without violence; and how one part of the community may be restrained from encroachments on the other. For this end governments have been instituted, in all their various forms, with much study, and too often with much bloodshed. But what is the use of all this, if, when these ends are obtained, there is yet so much wanting to felicity?

I am far from intending to insinuate, that the studies of political wisdom, or the labours of legislative patriotism, have been vain and idle. They are useful, but not effectual; they are conducive to that end, which yet they can-

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not fully gain. The legislator, who does what human power can attain towards the felicity of his fellow creatures, is not to be censured, because, by the imbecility of all human endeavours, he fails of his purpose; unless he has become culpable, by ascribing too much to his own powers, and arrogated to his industry, or his wit, that efficacy which wit and industry must always want, unless some higher power lends them assistance, and co-operates with them.

The husbandman may plough his fields with industry, and sow them with skill; he may manure them copiously, and fence them carefully; but the harvest must depend at last on celestial influence; and all his diligence is frustrated, unless the sun sheds its warmth, and the clouds pour down their moisture.

Thus, in all human affairs, when prudence and industry have done their utmost, the work is left to be completed by superiour agency; and in the security of peace, and stability of possession, our policy must at last call for help upon religion.

Human laws, however honestly instituted, or however vigorously enforced, must be limited in their effect, partly by our ignorance, and partly by our wickedness. Daily experience may convince us, that all the avenues by which injury and oppression may break in upon life, cannot be guarded by positive prohibitions. Every man sees and may feel evils, which no law can punish. And not only will there always remain possibilities of guilt, which legislative foresight cannot discover, but the laws will be often violated by wicked men, whose subtlety eludes detection, and whom, therefore, vindictive justice cannot bring within the reach of punishment.

These deficiencies in civil life can be supplied only by religion. The mere observer of human laws avoids only such offences as the laws forbid, and those only when the laws can detect his delinquency. But he who acts with the perpetual consciousness of the Divine presence, and considers himself as accountable for all his actions to the

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irreversible and unerring judgment of Omniscience, has other motives of action, and other reasons of forbearance. He is equally restrained from evil, in publick life, and in secret solitude; and has only one rule of action, by which "he does to others, what he would that others should do to him," and wants no other enforcement of his duty, than the fear of future punishment, and the hope of future rewards.

The first duty, therefore, of a governour is to diffuse through the community a spirit of religion, to endeavour that a sense of the Divine authority should prevail in all orders of men, and that the laws should be obeyed, in subordination to the universal and unchangeable edicts of the Creator and Ruler of the world.

How religion may be most effectually promoted, is an inquiry which every governour ought diligently to make; and he that inquires, with real wishes for information, will soon know his duty; for providence has seldom made the same things necessary and abstruse.

That religion may be invigorated and diffused, it is necessary that the external order of religion be diligently maintained, that the solemnities of worship be duly observed, and a proper reverence preserved for the times and the places appropriated to piety. The appropriations of time and place are, indeed, only means to the great end of holiness; but they are means, without which the end cannot be obtained; and every man must have observed, how much corruption prevails, where the attention to publick worship and to holy seasons is broken or relaxed.

Those that have in their hands the disposal of riches or honours, ought to bestow them on persons who are most eminent for sanctity of life. For though no man ought to consider temporary goods as the proper rewards of religious duties, yet they, who have them to give, are obliged to distribute them in such a manner as may make them most useful to the publick; and they will be most useful, when they increase the beneficence, and enlarge the influence of piety.

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It yet remains that governours cooperate with their laws by their own examples, and that as, by their height of place, they are always conspicuous, they exhibit to those eyes which are turned upon them "the beauty of holiness."

The present state of the world, however, affords us little hope, that virtue can, by any government, be so strongly impressed, or so widely diffused, as to supersede the necessity of suppressing wickedness. In the most diligent cultivation of the happiest soil, weeds will sometimes appear among fruits and flowers, and all that vigilance and labour can do is to check them as they rise. However virtue may be encouraged or rewarded, it can never appear to all minds the shortest means of present good. There will always be those who would rather grow rich by fraud, than by diligence, and who will provide for vitious pleasures by violence, rather than by labour. Against the attempts and artifices of such men, whence have simplicity and innocence their defence and security? Whence, but from the *Lex armata*, the vindictive law, that stands forth the champion of the weak, and the protectress of the innocent?

Nor is quiet and security in danger only from corrupt minds; for honest and beneficent men might often, were not the law to interpose, disturb society, and fill the country with violence. Two men, both of them wise, and both of them virtuous, may lay claim to the same possession, with pretensions, to the world specious, in their own thoughts just. Such disputes can be terminated only by force or law. Of force, it is apparent, that the exertion of it is an immediate evil, and that prevalence at last will be no proof of justice. Of law, the means are gentle and inoffensive, and the conclusion not only the confirmation of property, but the establishment of right. For this power of the law virtue itself will leave employment; for though crimes would hardly be committed but by predominance of passion, yet litigation must always subsist while there is difference of opinion. We can hope but

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faintly for the time when all men shall be honest; but the time seems still more remote in which all men shall be wise; and until we may be able to settle all claims for ourselves, let us rejoice that there is law to adjust them for us.

The care, however, of the best governour may be frustrated by disobedience and perverseness; and the best laws may strive in vain against radicated wickedness.

It is, therefore, fit to consider,

THIRDLY: How the people are to assist and further the endeavours of their governours.

As all government is power exerted by few upon many, it is apparent, that nations cannot be governed but by their own consent. The first duty, therefore, of subjects is obedience to the laws; such obedience as is the effect, not of compulsion, but of reverence; such as arises from a conviction of the instability of human virtue, and of the necessity of some coercive power, which may restrain the exorbitances of passions, and check the career of natural desires.

No man thinks laws unnecessary for others; and no man, if he considers his own inherent frailty, can justly think them unnecessary for himself. The wisest man is not always wise, and the best man is not always good. We all sometimes want the admonition of law, as supplemental to the dictates of reason, and the suggestions of conscience. And he that encourages irreverence, in himself, or others, to publick institutions, weakens all the human securities of peace, and all the corroborations of virtue.

That the proper influence of government may be preserved, and that the liberty which a just distribution of power naturally supports may not operate to its destruction, it is always to be remembered, that even the errours and deficiencies of authority must be treated with respect. All institutions are defective by their nature; and all rulers have their imperfections, like other men. But, as not every failing makes a bad man, so not every errour

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makes a bad government; and he that considers how few can properly adjust their own houses, will not wonder that into the multiplicity of national affairs deception or negligence should sometimes find their way. It is likewise necessary to remember, that as government is difficult to be administered, it is difficult to be understood; and that where very few have capacity to judge, very few have a right to censure.

The happiness of a nation must arise from the combined endeavours of governours and subjects. The duties of governing can be the lot of few, but all of us have the duties of subjects to perform; and every man ought to incite in himself, and in his neighbour, that obedience to the laws, and that respect to the chief magistrate, which may secure and promote concord and quiet. Of this, as of all other virtues, the true basis is religion. The laws will be easily obeyed by him who adds to human sanctions the obligations of conscience; and he will not easily be disposed to censure his superiours, whom religion has made acquainted with his own failings.

SERMON XXV.

[WRITTEN BY DR. JOHNSON, FOR THE FUNERAL OF HIS WIFE.]

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." JOHN xi. 25, 26. former part.

To afford adequate consolations to the last hour, to cheer the gloomy passage through the valley of the shadow of death, and to ease that anxiety, to which beings, prescient of their own dissolution, and conscious of their own danger, must be necessarily exposed, is the privilege only

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of revealed religion. All those, to whom the supernatural right of heavenly doctrine has never been imparted, however formidable for power, or illustrious for wisdom, have wanted that knowledge of their future state which alone can give comfort to misery, or security to enjoyment; and have been forced to rush forwards to the grave, through the darkness of ignorance; or, if they happened to be more refined and inquisitive, to solace their passage with the fallacious and uncertain glimmer of philosophy.

There were, doubtless, at all times, as there are now, many who lived with very little thought concerning their end; many whose time was wholly filled up by publick or domestick business, by the pursuits of ambition, or the desire of riches; many who dissolved themselves in luxurious enjoyment, and, when they could lull their minds by any present pleasure, had no regard to distant events, but withheld their imagination from sallying out into futurity, or catching any terrour that might interrupt their quiet; and there were many who rose so little above animal life, that they were completely engrossed by the objects about them, and had their views extended no further than to the next hour; in whom the ray of reason was half extinct, and had neither hopes nor fears, but of some near advantage, of some pressing danger.

But multitudes there must always be, and greater multitudes as arts and civility prevail, who cannot wholly withdraw their thoughts from death. All cannot be distracted with business, or stunned with the clamours of assemblies, or the shouts of armies. All cannot live in the perpetual dissipation of successive diversions, nor will all enslave their understandings to their senses, and seek felicity in the gross gratifications of appetite. Some must always keep their reason and their fancy in action, and seek either honour or pleasure from intellectual operations; and from them, others, more negligent or sluggish, will be in time fixed or awakened; knowledge will be perpetually diffused, and curiosity hourly enlarged.

But, when the faculties were once put in motion, when

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the mind had broken loose from the shackles of sense, and made excursions to remote consequences, the first consideration that would stop her course must be incessant waste of life, the approach of age, and the certainty of death; the approach of that time, in which strength must fail, and pleasure fly away, and the certainty of that dissolution which shall put an end to all the prospects of this world. It is impossible to think, and not sometimes to think on death. Hope, indeed, has many powers of delusion; whatever is possible, however unlikely, it will teach us to promise ourselves; but death no man has escaped, and, therefore, no man can hope to escape it. From this dreadful expectation no shelter or refuge can be found. Whatever we see, forces it upon us; whatever is, new or old, flourishing or declining, either directly, or by very short deduction, leads man to the consideration of his end; and accordingly we find, that the fear of death has always been considered as the great enemy of human quiet, the polluter of the feast of happiness, and embitterer of the cup of joy. The young man who rejoiceth in his youth, amidst his musick and his gaiety, has always been disturbed with the thought, that his youth will be quickly at an end. The monarch, to whom it is said that he is a God, has always been reminded by his own heart, that he shall die like man.

This unwelcome conviction, which is thus continually pressed upon the mind, every art has been employed to oppose. The general remedy, in all ages, has been to chase it away from the present moment, and to gain a suspense of the pain that could not be cured. In the ancient writings, we, therefore, find the shortness of life frequently mentioned as an excitement to jollity and pleasure; and may plainly discover, that the authors had no other means of relieving that gloom with which the uncertainty of human life clouded their conceptions. Some of the philosophers, indeed, appear to have sought a nobler, and a more certain remedy, and to have endeavoured to overpower the force of death by arguments, and to

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dispel the gloom by the light of reason. They inquired into the nature of the soul of man, and showed, at least probably, that it is a substance distinct from matter, and, therefore, independent on the body, and exempt from dissolution and corruption. The arguments, whether physical or moral, upon which they established this doctrine, it is not necessary to recount to a Christian audience, by whom it is believed upon more certain proofs, and higher authority; since though they were such as might determine the calm mind of a philosopher, inquisitive only after truth, and uninfluenced by external objects; yet they were such as required leisure and capacity, not allowed in general to mankind; they were such as many could never understand, and of which, therefore, the efficacy and comfort were confined to a small number, without any benefit to the unenlightened multitude.

Such has been hitherto the nature of philosophical arguments, and such it must probably for ever remain; for, though, perhaps, the successive industry of the studious may increase the number, or advance the probability, of arguments; and, though continual contemplation of matter will, I believe, show it, at length, wholly incapable of motion, sensation, or order, by any powers of its own, and, therefore, necessarily establish the immateriality, and, probably, the immortality of the soul; yet there never can be expected a time, in which the gross body of mankind can attend to such speculations, or can comprehend them; and, therefore, there never can be a time, in which this knowledge can be taught in such a manner, as to be generally conducive to virtue, or happiness, but by a messenger from God, from the Creator of the world, and the Father of spirits.

To persuade common and uninstructed minds to the belief of any fact, we may every day perceive, that the testimony of one man, whom they think worthy of credit, has more force than the arguments of a thousand reasoners, even when the arguments are such as they may be imagined completely qualified to comprehend. Hence it is

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plain, that the constitution of mankind is such, that abstruse and intellectual truths can be taught no otherwise than by positive assertion, supported by some sensible evidence, by which the assertor is secured from the suspicion of falsehood; and that if it should please God to inspire a teacher with some demonstration of the immortality of the soul, it would far less avail him for general instruction, than the power of working a miracle in its vindication, unless God should, at the same time, inspire the hearers with docility and apprehension, and turn, at once, all the sensual, the giddy, the lazy, the busy, the corrupt, and the proud, into humble, abstracted, and diligent philosophers.

To bring life and immortality to light; to give such proofs of our future existence, as may influence the most narrow mind, and fill the most capacious intellect; to open prospects beyond the grave, in which the thought may expatiate without obstruction; and to supply a refuge and support to the mind amidst all the miseries of decaying nature, is the peculiar excellence of the gospel of Christ. Without this heavenly Instructor, he who feels himself sinking under the weight of years, or melting away by the slow waste of a lingering disease, has no other remedy than obdurate patience, a gloomy resignation to that which cannot be avoided; and he who follows his friend, or whoever there is yet dearer than a friend, to the grave, can have no other consolation than that which he derives from the general misery; the reflection, that he suffers only what the rest of mankind must suffer; a poor consideration, which rather awes us to silence, than sooths us to quiet, and which does not abate the sense of our calamity, though it may sometimes make us ashamed to complain.

But so much is our condition improved by the gospel, so much is the sting of death rebated, that we may now be invited to the contemplation of our mortality, as to a pleasing employment of the mind, to an exercise delightful and recreative, not only when calamity and persecution drive us from the assemblies of men, and sorrow and woe represent the grave as a refuge and an asylum, but even

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in the hours of the highest earthly prosperity, when our cup is full, and when we have laid up stores for ourselves; for, in him who believes the promise of the Saviour of the world, it can cause no disturbance to remember, that this night his soul may be required of him; and he who suffers one of the sharpest evils which this life can show, amidst all its varieties of misery; he that has lately been separated from the person whom a long participation of good and evil had endeared to him; he who has seen kindness snatched from his arms, and fidelity torn from his bosom; he whose ear is no more to be delighted with tender instruction, and whose virtue shall be no more awakened by the seasonable whispers of mild reproof, may yet look, without horrour, on the tomb which encloses the remains of what he loved and honoured, as upon a place which, if it revives the sense of his loss, may calm him with the hope of that state in which there shall be no more grief or separation.

To Christians the celebration of a funeral is by no means a solemnity of barren and unavailing sorrow, but established by the church for other purposes.

First, for the consolation of sorrow. Secondly, for the enforcement of piety. The mournful solemnity of the burial of the dead is instituted, first, for the consolation of that grief to which the best minds, if not supported and regulated by religion, are most liable. They who most endeavour the happiness of others, who devote their thoughts to tenderness and pity, and studiously maintain the reciprocation of kindness, by degrees mingle their souls, in such a manner, as to feel from their separation, a total destitution of happiness, a sudden abruption of all their prospects, a cessation of all their hopes, schemes, and desires. The whole mind becomes a gloomy vacuity, without any image or form of pleasure, a chaos of confused wishes, directed to no particular end, or to that which, while we wish, we cannot hope to obtain; for the dead will not revive; those whom God has called away from the present state of existence, can be seen no more in it; we must go to them; but they cannot return to us.

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Yet, to show that grief is vain, is to afford very little comfort; yet this is all that reason can afford; but religion, our only friend in the moment of distress, in the moment when the help of man is vain, when fortitude and cowardice sink down together, and the sage and the virgin mingle their lamentations; religion will inform us, that sorrow and complaint are not only vain, but unreasonable and erroneous. The voice of God, speaking by his Son, and his apostles, will instruct us, that she, whose departure we now mourn, is not dead, but sleepeth; that only her body is committed to the ground, but that the soul is returned to God, who gave it; that God, who is infinitely merciful, who hateth nothing that he has made, who desireth not the death of a sinner; to that God, who only can compare performance with ability, who alone knows how far the heart has been pure, or corrupted, how inadvertency has surprised, fear has betrayed, or weakness has impeded; to that God, who marks every aspiration after a better state, who hears the prayer which the voice cannot utter, records the purpose that perished without opportunity of action, the wish that vanished away without attainment, who is always ready to receive the penitent, to whom sincere contrition is never late, and who will accept the tears of a returning sinner.

Such are the reflections to which we are called by the voice of Truth; and from these we shall find that comfort which philosophy cannot supply, and that peace which the world cannot give. The contemplation of the mercy of God may justly afford some consolation, even when the office of burial is performed to those who have been snatched away without visible amendment of their lives: for, who shall presume to determine the state of departed souls, to lay open what God hath concealed, and to search the counsels of the Most Highest?—But, with more confident hope of pardon and acceptance, may we commit those to the receptacles of mortality, who have lived without any open or enormous crimes; who have endeavoured to propitiate God by repentance, and have died, at last,

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with hope and resignation. Among these she surely may be remembered whom we have followed hither to the tomb, to pay her the last honours, and to resign her to the grave: she, whom many, who now hear me, have known, and whom none, who were capable of distinguishing either moral or intellectual excellence, could know, without esteem, or tenderness. To praise the extent of her knowledge, the acuteness of her wit, the accuracy of her judgment, the force of her sentiments, or the elegance of her expression, would ill suit with the occasion.

Such praise would little profit the living, and as little gratify the dead, who is now in a place where vanity and competition are forgotten for ever; where she finds a cup of water given for the relief of a poor brother, a prayer uttered for the mercy of God to those whom she wanted power to relieve, a word of instruction to ignorance, a smile of comfort to misery, of more avail than all those accomplishments which confer honour and distinction among the sons of folly. Yet, let it be remembered, that her wit was never employed to scoff at goodness, nor her reason to dispute against truth. In this age of wild opinions, she was as free from skepticism as the cloistered virgin. She never wished to signalize herself by the singularity of paradox. She had a just diffidence of her own reason, and desired to practise rather than dispute. Her practice was such as her opinions naturally produced. She was exact and regular in her devotions, full of confidence in the Divine mercy, submissive to the dispensations of providence, extensively charitable in her judgments and opinions, grateful for every kindness that she received, and willing to impart assistance of every kind to all whom her little power enabled her to benefit. She passed through many months of languor, weakness, and decay, without a single murmur of impatience, and often expressed her adoration of that mercy which granted her so long time for recollection and penitence. That she had no failing cannot be supposed: but she has now appeared before the Almighty Judge; and it would ill become beings like us,

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weak and sinful as herself, to remember those faults which, we trust, Eternal Purity has pardoned.

Let us, therefore, preserve her memory for no other end but to imitate her virtues; and let us add her example to the motives to piety which this solemnity was, secondly, instituted to enforce.

It would not, indeed, be reasonable to expect, did we not know the inattention and perverseness of mankind, that any one who had followed a funeral, could fail to return home without new resolutions of a holy life: for, who can see the final period of all human schemes and undertakings, without conviction of the vanity of all that terminates in the present state? For, who can see the wise, the brave, the powerful, or the beauteous, carried to the grave, without reflection on the emptiness of all those distinctions, which set us here in opposition to each other? And who, when he sees the vanity of all terrestrial advantages, can forbear to wish for a more permanent and certain happiness? Such wishes, perhaps, often arise, and such resolutions are often formed; but, before the resolution can be exerted, before the wish can regulate the conduct, new prospects open before us, new impressions are received; the temptations of the world solicit, the passions of the heart are put into commotion; we plunge again into the tumult, engage again in the contest, and forget that what we gain cannot be kept, and that the life, for which we are thus busy to provide, must be quickly at an end.

But, let us not be thus shamefully deluded! Let us not thus idly perish in our folly, by neglecting the loudest call of providence; nor, when we have followed our friends, and our enemies to the tomb, suffer ourselves to be surprised by the dreadful summons, and die, at last, amazed, and unprepared! Let every one whose eye glances on this bier, examine what would have been his condition, if the same hour had called him to judgment, and remember, that, though he is now spared, he may, perhaps, be to-morrow among separate spirits. The present moment is in our power: let us, therefore, from the present

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moment, begin our repentance! Let us not, any longer, harden our hearts, but hear, this day, the voice of our Saviour and our God, and begin to do, with all our powers, whatever we shall wish to have done, when the grave shall open before us! Let those, who came hither weeping and lamenting, reflect, that they have not time for useless sorrow; that their own salvation is to be secured, and that "the day is far spent, and the night cometh, when no man can work;" that tears are of no value to the dead, and that their own danger may justly claim their whole attention! Let those who entered this place unaffected and indifferent, and whose only purpose was to behold this funeral spectacle, consider, that she, whom they thus behold with negligence, and pass by, was lately partaker of the same nature with themselves; and that they likewise are hastening to their end, and must soon, by others equally negligent, be buried and forgotten! Let all remember, that the day of life is short, and that the day of grace may be much shorter; that this may be the last warning which God will grant us, and that, perhaps, he, who looks on this grave unalarmed, may sink unreformed into his own.

Let it, therefore, be our care, when we retire from this solemnity, that we immediately turn from our wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right; that, whenever disease, or violence, shall dissolve our bodies, our souls may be saved alive, and received into everlasting habitations; where, with angels and archangels, and all the glorious host of heaven, they shall sing glory to God on high, and the Lamb, for ever and ever.

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